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PIECES OF A SPIRAL
TACHIBANA KAIMU
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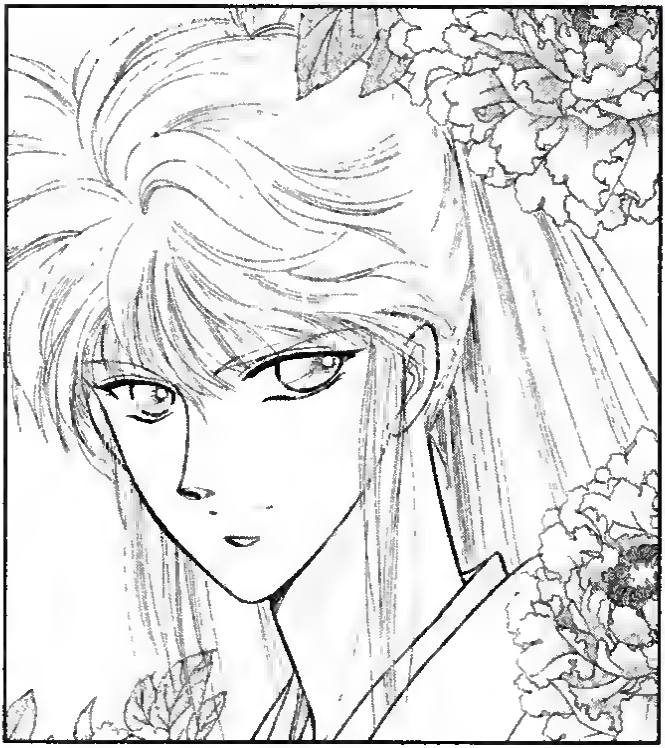
PIECES OF A SPIRAL

Vol. 1



By Tachibana Kaimu

PIECES OF A SPIRAL

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Chapter One:

Pieces of a Spiral

HEY, THAT'S MY VOICE.
TIME IS SHORT. THE CITADEL IS LOST.
BISHU-SAMA, NO! I WILL NEVER LEAVE YOUR SIDE!
BISHU? THAT'S NOT MY NAME!
HUH? WHAT'S HE TALKING ABOUT?
I CANNOT ESCAPE. BUT YOU BOTH MUST LEAVE AT ONCE.
TH-THAT'S ME!
BISHU-SAMA, YOU ARE OUR TEACHER AND GUIDE.
IT IS OUR DUTY TO PROTECT YOU.
.....
.....
THAT FACE...
WHO?!
BISHU-SAMA!!

SAKUYA AND WAKYO, I HEREBY BEQUEATH MY POWER TO YOU BOTH.
BY THIS POWER, MY SPIRIT WILL CARRY ON WITHIN YOU.
BUT YOU MUST NEVER FORGET-- NEITHER ONE OF YOU CAN SEIZE THE DAY WITHOUT THE AID OF THE OTHER.
THAT'S MY FACE! ME! RIGHT BEFORE MY EYES!
!
BOLT
.....
OKINO! WAKE UP ALREADY! WHAT IS THE MATTER WITH YOU?

ALRIGHT, ALREADY! I'M UP. I'M UP!
WILL YOU EVER GET OUT OF BED? EVERY MORNING IT'S THE SAME THING!!
DON'T SHOUT SO EARLY IN THE MORNING
OH, MAN. IT WAS A DREAM.
.....
OKINO! GET UP THIS INSTANT! YOU'RE GOING TO BE LATE!
THAT VOICE--IT'S THE SAME AS THE VOICE IN THE DREAM.
HURRY UP AND EAT YOUR BREAKFAST
MORNING
SPLASH
SAME FACE...
SAME VOICE...

COLOR OF THE EYES, MAYBE...
HMMMM...
HMM, SOMETHING ABOUT HIM WAS DIFFERENT... BUT WHAT?
BUT HE WASN'T ME, THAT'S FOR SURE.
WHAT WAS IT...HIS NAME?
HEY, OKINO, HURRY UP.
UH... WHAT'RE YOU DOING?
POINK
N-NO! I JUST HAD SOME JUNK IN MY EYE!
BEAT IT!!
EEEYEEEW! FREAK!! OKINO'S STARING AT HIMSELF IN THE MIRROR!!
I HAVE FOUND YOU...

FOUND YOU AT LAST!
SEE YOU LATER.

?!
SAKUYA.
?
SAKUYA, IT'S ME.
I'M WAKYO.

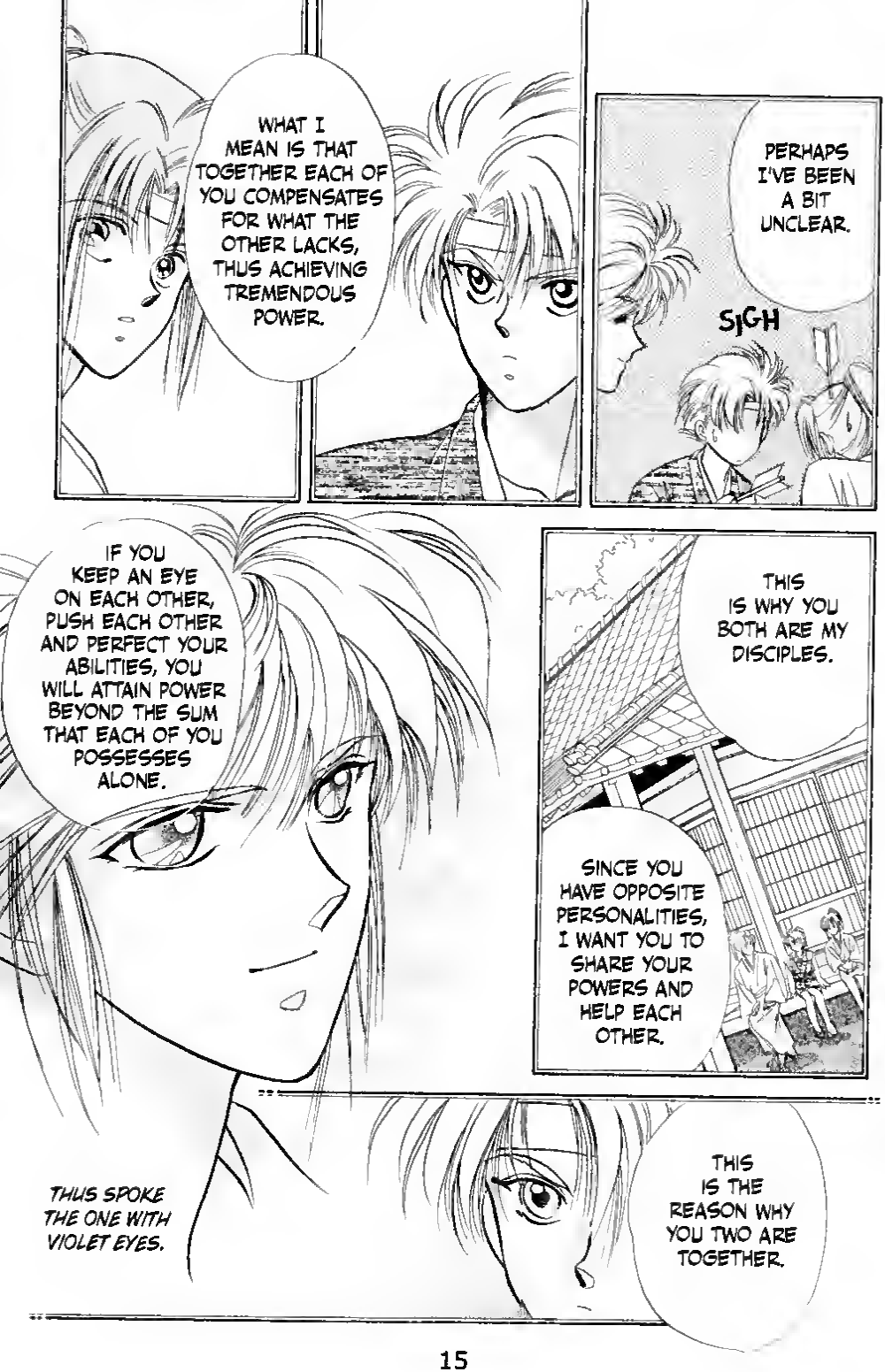
HE'S THE ONE IN MY DREAM.
WHA-- IT'S LIKE LOOKING IN A MIRROR!
VIOLET EYES...
I'VE BEEN LOOKING EVERY-WHERE FOR YOU!
WHAP!
AGGH!! GET YOUR HANDS OFF ME!!

S-SA-KUYA?
WHAT'S GOING ON HERE?
STAY AWAY...
WHAT'S WRONG?
THE DREAM... IS IT THE DREAM AGAIN?
I SAID STAY AWAY! DON'T COME NEAR ME WITH THAT FACE!
MY NAME'S NOT SAKUYA!
STOP IT... STOP...
SAKUYA, STOP TALKING NONSENSE! WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH YOU?!
M-MY FACE... DON'T YELL AT ME WITH MY OWN FACE...
IDIOT! STOP PLAYING GAMES!! DO YOU KNOW THE HELL I'VE GONE THROUGH TRYING TO FIND YOU?!
I-I DON'T KNOW WHO I AM ANYMORE...
I'M TELLING YOU-- I DON'T KNOW WHO YOU ARE...
OKAY, OKAY, YOU'RE IN MY DREAM, GOT MY FACE AND EVERYTHING. ENOUGH ALREADY!

THIS VOICE-- THE VOICE OF BISHU-SAMA-- SAYS IT DOESN'T KNOW ME...
YOU'RE NOT JOKING... YOU STILL DON'T SEE, DO YOU?
AFTER ALL THAT WE HAVE FACED-- YOU DON'T KNOW ME?! SAKUYAAA!!

REMEMBER, SAKUYA! YOU MUST REMEMBER!!
THE POWER! MEMORIES OF THE LAST WORLD!
BISHU-SAMA'S SPIRIT ENERGY!!
CLUMP
IF WE DON'T REUNITE, IT ALL MEANS NOTHING! NOTHING!!
SAKUYA, IF YOU DON'T REMEMBER-- REMEMBER FOR US...

YOU'LL WASTE THE POWER THAT BISHU-SAMA ENTRUSTED TO US! WITHOUT EACH OTHER WE ARE INCOMPLETE! WE ARE NOTHING!!
AHHH...
YES, THAT IS CORRECT.
...EACH OF US IS INCOMPLETE WITHOUT THE OTHER?
SO...

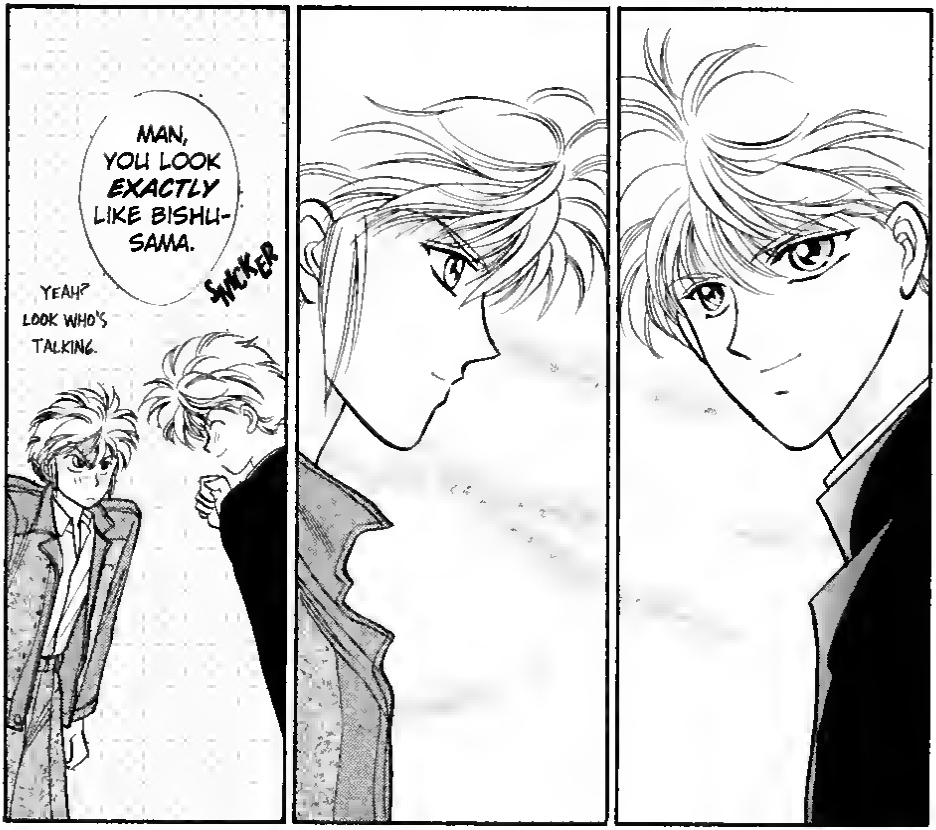

WHAT I MEAN IS THAT TOGETHER EACH OF YOU COMPENSATES FOR WHAT THE OTHER LACKS, THUS ACHIEVING TREMENDOUS POWER.
PERHAPS I'VE BEEN A BIT UNCLEAR.
SIGH
IF YOU KEEP AN EYE ON EACH OTHER, PUSH EACH OTHER AND PERFECT YOUR ABILITIES, YOU WILL ATTAIN POWER BEYOND THE SUM THAT EACH OF YOU POSSESSES ALONE.
THIS IS WHY YOU BOTH ARE MY DISCIPLES.
SINCE YOU HAVE OPPOSITE PERSONALITIES, I WANT YOU TO SHARE YOUR POWERS AND HELP EACH OTHER.
THUS SPOKE THE ONE WITH VIOLET EYES.
THIS IS THE REASON WHY YOU TWO ARE TOGETHER.

SO, WHAT'S ALL THIS "I-DON'T-REMEMBER-ANYTHING" BULL, HUH?!
AH, YES... THE EYES.
SINCE I WAS A CHILD, MEMORIES OF THE LAST WORLD--OF HIS EYES--HIS FORM, HAVE BECKONED ME.
UNTIL NOW, I'VE LIVED IN THIS WORLD THINKING ABOUT NOTHING BUT BEING NEAR BISHU-SAMA.
.....
THAT'S WHY I HAD TO SET OUT IN SEARCH OF YOU! SEPARATELY, WE CANNOT CHANNEL BISHU-SAMA'S SPIRIT!!

YES, I REMEMBER-- THE COLOR OF THOSE EYES...
IT'S ALL COMING BACK NOW...
BISHU-SAMA...
BISHU-SAMA'S SOFT VIOLET EYES...
WAKYO.

SAME OLD WAKYO...STILL CHOKES UP AT THE LITTLEST THING.
I MUST NEVER, EVER FORGET.
THE PRECIOUS GIFT BEQUEATHED TO US BY BISHU-SAMA...
...THE POWER OF THE LAST WORLD.
WE'D BETTER NOT SHOW THOSE EYES WHEN WE DON'T NEED TO.
HOOO
OH...
THAT'LL MAKE IT EASIER FOR US TO STAY TOGETHER.
WHAT?
DON'T START CRYING--NOT WITH THAT FACE.
'CAUSE IT BRINGS BACK MEMORIES OF BISHU-SAMA WHEN HE CRIED.

WHOOOSH
OH YEAH!! HE'S BACK, BABY, HE'S BACK!!
HEY, SORRY NOT A MORNING PERSON, Y'KNOW.


MAN, YOU LOOK EXACTLY LIKE BISHU-SAMA.
SNICKER
YEAH? LOOK WHO'S TALKING.

BUT, ALAS, WE CAME INTO THIS WORLD STILL BEARING THE MEMORIES OF OUR PAST EXISTENCE.

THESE ARE THINGS THAT THE SPIRIT SHOULD LEAVE BEHIND WHEN IT DEPARTS ONE WORLD FOR THE NEXT.

MEMORIES OF THE LAST WORLD, SO LONG AGO AND FAR AWAY...

MEMORIES OF AN AWESOME POWER THAT WE POSSESS ONLY WHEN TOGETHER..

...AND A POWER THAT WE WILL USE WHEN THE MOMENT DEMANDS.

CHAPTER 1: END

Chapter Two:
Mirrors Within Mirrors

TOK
HEY, MASAYUKI.
OH, THERE YOU ARE. MAN, STOP MESSING AROUND WITH THAT STUFF. HURRY UP, LET'S GET TO CLASS!
I GOT *SOMETHIN'* REALLY STRANGE TO SHOW YA!
?
NO WAY! YOU'RE LIKE TOTALLY NOT RELATED AT ALL?!
2-F

OH MY GOD! I LOOOVE THAT!
YEAH, LIKE YOU ALWAYS SEE ON TV 'N' THE MOVIES.
HEY, MAYBE THEY'RE LIKE TWINS SEPARATED AT BIRTH!
GET OUT! YOU CAN'T EVEN TELL 'EM APART!
C'MON, OKINO-- YOU'RE OUR CLASS-MATE.
SHUT UP! HE'S MAKOTO IMAIZUMI. I'M KAZUKI OKINO. WHAT'S SO HARD ABOUT THAT?
WELL, THEY DO SAY THE WORLD HAS THREE PEOPLE WITH THE SAME FACE.
NATTER
NATTER
NATTER
NATTER
NATTER
NATTER
C'MON, TELL US THE REAL TRUTH-- PLEASE?
YOU GOTTA TELL US YOUR SECRET. PLEASE, PLEASE, PLEASE TELL US--WE'LL NEVER EVER TELL ANYONE.
HEY, SO WHY'D YOU TRANSFER TO OUR SCHOOL ANYWAY?
.....

WHA--?
YOU STU--
MMPH
EULP!
WHY?! DIDN'T YOU SAY WE'RE GONNA STICK TOGETHER?!
OKINO-KUN SAID WE'D HANG TOGETHER.
WELL, OF COURSE, IMAIZUMI-KUN! I MEAN, WE'RE BUDS WHO LOOK ALIKE, RIGHT?
WELL, SURE, 'CAUSE YOU JUST GOT HERE.
S-SORRY.
?
?
?
?
YOU IDIOT.

IT'S MASAYUKI. HE BARELY MADE IT ON TIME TODAY.
SLAM
OKAY, SO YOU SAID YOU HAD SOMETHING INTERESTING TO SHOW ME?
YEAH, YEAH-- LOOKIT! CHECK THIS OUT!
MASAYUKI WAS OBSESSING WITH HIS DIRT AGAIN.

NO WAY-- TWO OKINOS!
WAIT A SEC...
AH?

YOUR EYES...
Y-YOU GOT A FEVER! OH, MY GOD, THIS IS TERRIBLE!
AGGH!!
...THEY'RE VI-
UM...YOUR GLASSES?
YES, TO THE NURSE, OFF TO THE NURSE YOU GO.
...CLASS IS ABOUT TO START.
BUT...
WE'VE GOT TO GET YOU TO THE NURSE, IM-MEDIATELY!!

WHAT?
IT'S HIM.
WHAT, ARE YOU CRAZY?! SHOWING BISHU-SAMA'S EYES IN FRONT OF EVERYBODY LIKE THAT!
WE'VE ONLY JUST GOTTEN BACK TOGETHER...
G-GARAI? YOU MEAN BISHU-SAMA'S...
WHAT?! WAIT A SEC!
GARAI! I SAW GARAI!! RIGHT OVER THAT GUY WHO CAME INTO THE CLASSROOM!!
SAKUYA! DIDN'T YOU SEE?!
LIKE I SAID, "WHAT?"
YOU DIDN'T SEE HIM? YOU CAN'T BE SERIOUS?!
HEH HEH HEH

WAKYO, SAKUYAAA...
IT'S BEEN A LONG TIME.
GA-
...BUT THE FORM REMAINS UNSEEN
WE HEAR HIM...
GARAI.
LOOK, BISHU-SAMA, THE WHOLE CROP HAS TURNED BLACK LIKE THIS.
PEOPLE WHO TRY TO EAT IT WRITHE IN AGONY AND DIE HORRIBLY.

HMMM...
IT'S *POISON*.
IT IS THE WORK OF A DEMON.
BISHU-SAMA, PLEASE HELP US!
I WILL DO IT. I WILL GO TO THE FIELDS AT ONCE.
...
TELL EVERYONE THAT THEY ARE NOT TO TOUCH THESE THINGS.
YES, SIR.

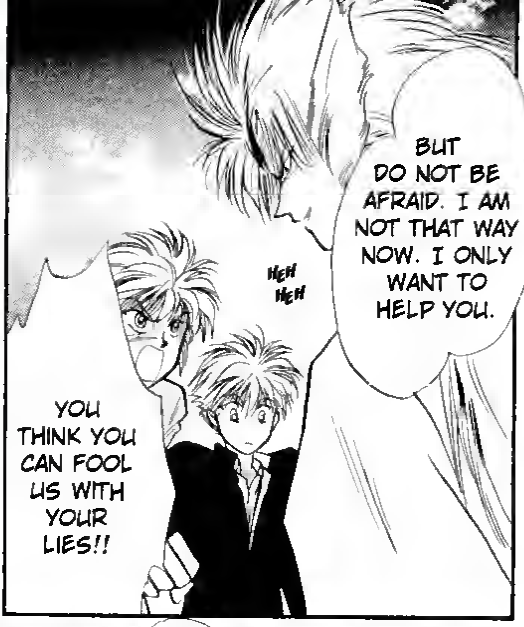
AH, IS THIS NOT EXQUISITELY DELICIOUS?
CRUNCH
ALAS, THIS IS YOUR DOING.
FATHER.
HAVE A TASTE, BOY. I THINK YOU'LL ALSO FIND IT QUITE ACCOMMODATING

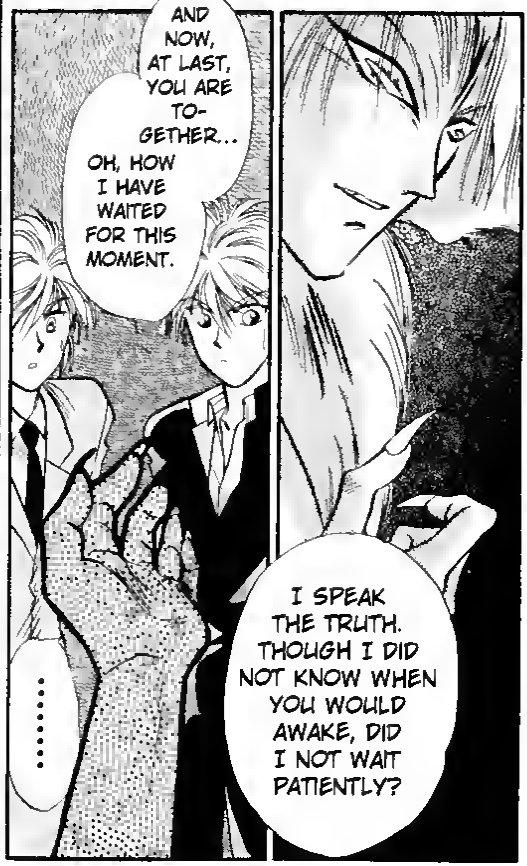
INDEED YOU WILL, MY BELOVED SON.
.....
WH- WHAT ARE YOU LAUGHING AT!
HEH HEH HEH
WHAT COULD BISHU HAVE BEEN THINKING-- DIVVYING UP HIS POWER TO A COUPLE OF CHILDREN LIKE YOU?
IT IS REALLY QUITE BEYOND ME.
HOW CAN I KEEP FROM LAUGHING?
A PAIR OF *THAT* FACE SIDE BY SIDE.

SAKUYA!!
SAKUYA, BE CAREFUL! DON'T MOVE!!
?
?
?
HMM, YES...
?
HEH HEH
IT SEEMS YOUR POWER STILL SLUMBERS, YES?

LISTEN ...
I WILL BECOME YOUR MASTER AND RESTORE YOUR POWER.
NO--I WILL GIVE YOU POWER GREATER THAN BISHU.
LIAR!! YOUR DEEDS CAUSED BISHU-SAMA HORRIBLE SUFFERING!
BESIDES, BISHU-SAMA LOCKED YOU AWAY.
YES, WELL ...
HAVE YOU FORGOTTEN, WAKYO, SAKUYA?
I WAS INDEED IMPRISONED BY THAT IMPUDENT WHELP'S POWER.
BUT, AT THE MOMENT OF REINCARNATION, AS THE POWER CHANNELED TO BOTH OF YOU--AT THAT INSTANT--THE BONDS THAT HELD ME VANISHED.
IN THIS WORLD THERE IS NO BISHU-SAMA, AND NO POWER THAT CAN IMPRISON ME.
EVEN FOR YOU TWO NOW IT IS FUTILE.

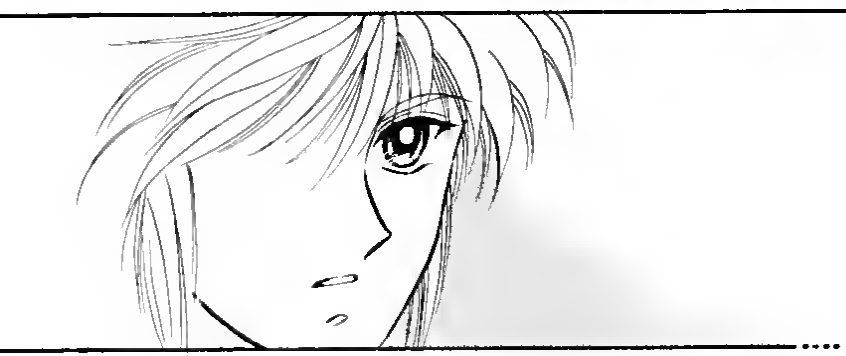
NOW COME, TAKE MY HAND.
I WILL REKINDLE THE POWER OF BISHU THAT LIES WITHIN YOU.


BUT DO NOT BE AFRAID. I AM NOT THAT WAY NOW. I ONLY WANT TO HELP YOU.
HEH HEH
YOU THINK YOU CAN FOOL US WITH YOUR LIES!!


AND NOW, AT LAST, YOU ARE TO-GETHER...
OH, HOW I HAVE WAITED FOR THIS MOMENT.
.....
I SPEAK THE TRUTH. THOUGH I DID NOT KNOW WHEN YOU WOULD AWAKE, DID I NOT WAIT PATIENTLY?

THE TEACHER'S WONDERING WHAT'S UP. BETTER GET BACK TO CLASS.
YEAH, OKAY ...
MASA-YUKI!
TSK
HEY, OKINO AND... UH...YOU, THE NEW GUY!
WHAT'RE YOU DOING IN HERE? YOU WEREN'T AT THE NURSE'S, SO I WENT LOOKING FOR YOU.

!
IF YOU DON'T USE THE POWER AT YOUR COMMAND, IT'S NOTHING MORE THAN A PRETTY DECORATION.
YOU FEELING ALRIGHT, IMAIZUMI-KUN?
IMAIZUMI-KUN?
YEAH, I'M UH...
HE VAN-ISHED.

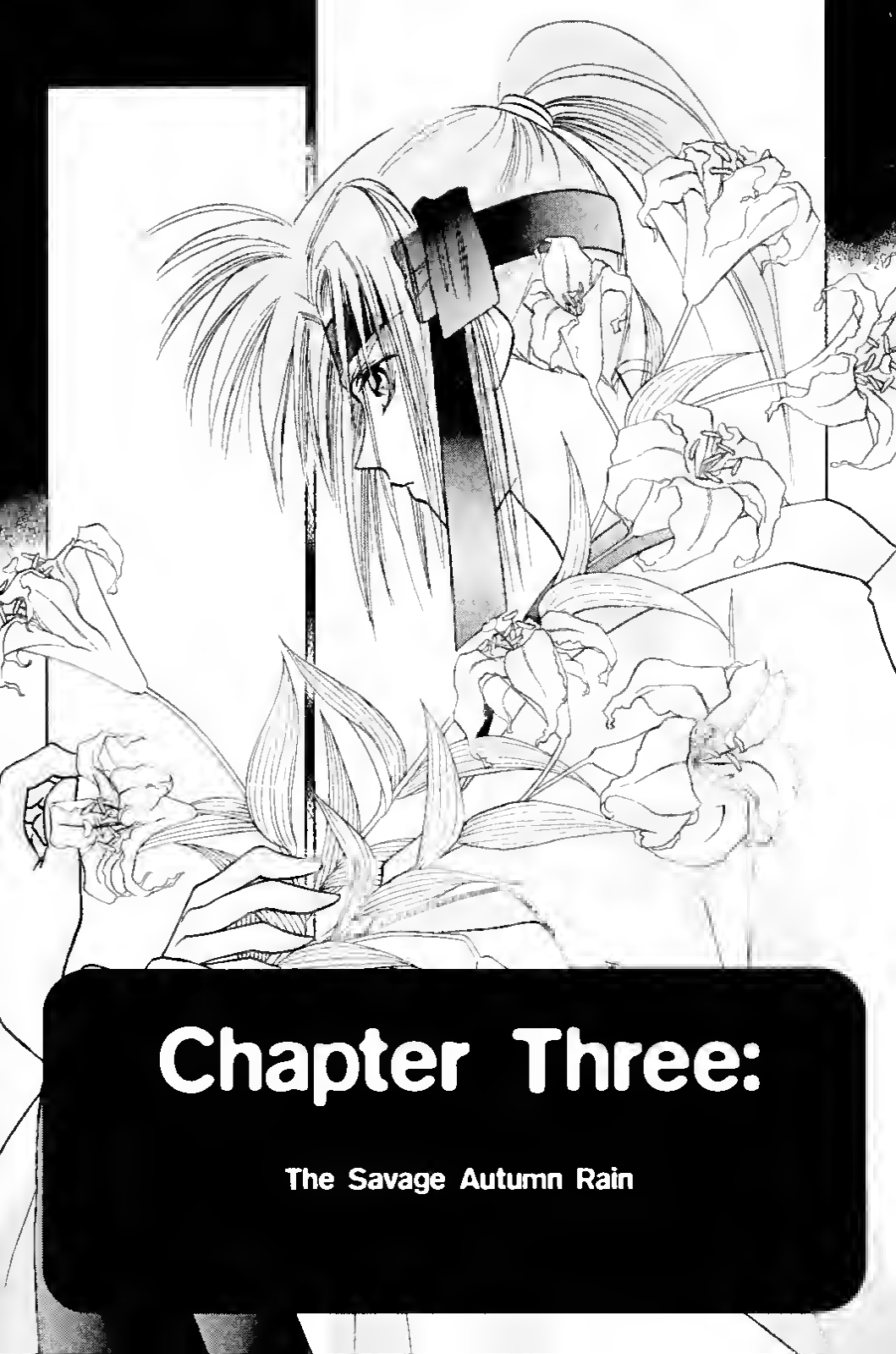


I MUST MAKE THE POWER MINE BEFORE THE TIME COMES.

YOU'LL LEARN TO REGRET RELEASING YOUR MAGIC TO IMPRISON ME.

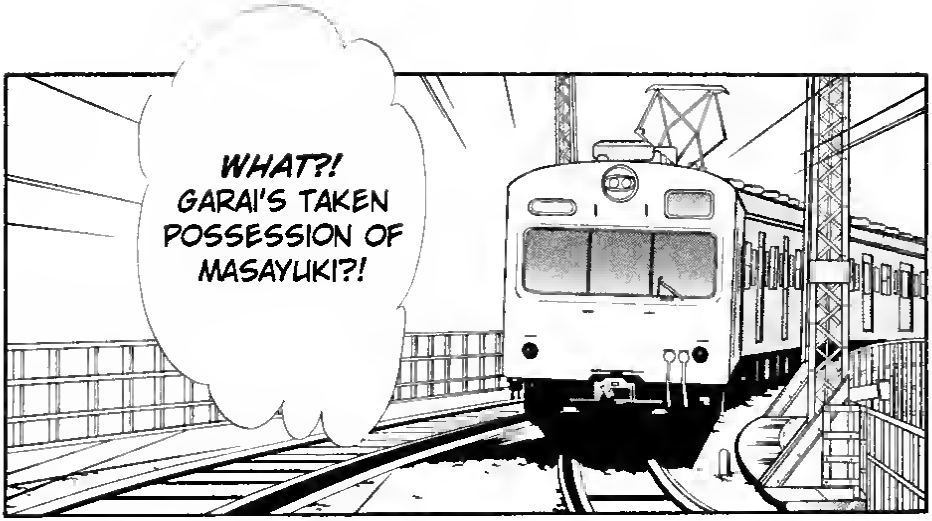
YES, YOU WILL REGRET IT, BISHU MY CHILD...

CHAPTER 2: END



Chapter Three:

The Savage Autumn Rain


WHAT?! GARAI'S TAKEN POSSESSION OF MASAYUKI?!

GLANCE
WE STAND OUT ENOUGH ALREADY.
STARE
SORRY.
SORRY.

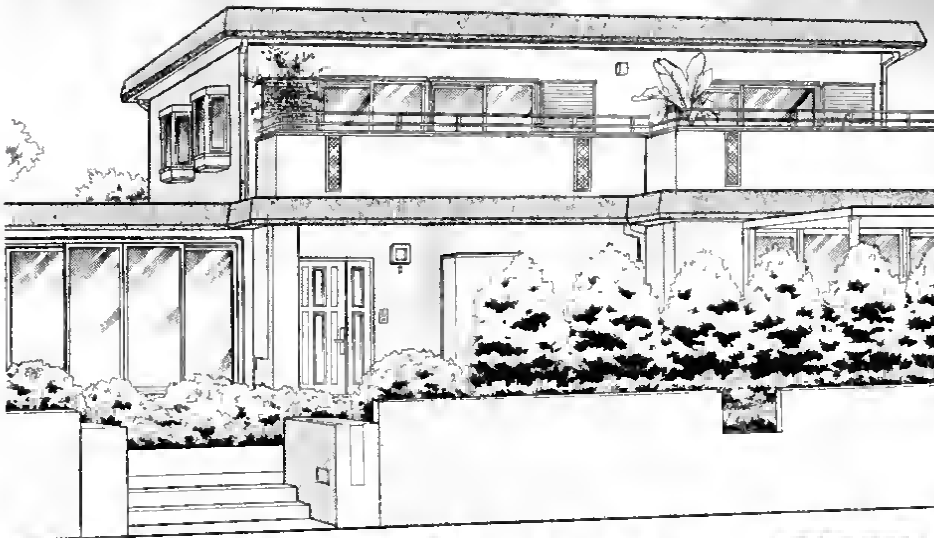
→SSH!← KEEP IT DOWN!

STOP JOKING AROUND ABOUT GARAI TAKING POSSESSION OF MASAYUKI.
I'M SERIOUS! I COULD SEE GARAI RIGHT NEXT TO THE GUY.

DON'T YOU BELIEVE WHAT'S RIGHT BEFORE YOUR OWN EYES?
SO, DO YOU THINK GARAI--OF ALL BEINGS--CAN HANG AROUND A HUMAN ALL DAY HE DOESN'T INTEND TO POSSESS?
I MEAN, I'VE KNOWN MASAYUKI FOR A LONG TIME.
BUT EVEN IF I CAN'T, I SHOULD AT LEAST BE ABLE TO LOOK AT MASAYUKI AND TELL IF HE'S BEEN POSSESSED.
HMMPH
I DON'T GET IT. WHY CAN'T I SEE GARAI?
NEITHER DO I.
NAH, I DON'T.
BESIDES, WE HAVEN'T RECOVERED ALL OUR POWER. DON'T YOU THINK IT'S RISKY?
MEET, TALK... I CAN'T EVEN SEE GARAI.
WELL, ANYWAY, IF WE MEET UP WITH THEM WE'LL PROBABLY FIND OUT.

SAKUYA, IT ISN'T LIKE YOU TO USE SUCH COWARDLY TALK.
WE'VE ONLY JUST AWAKENED TO THE POWER WE INHERITED FROM BISHU-SAMA. IF YOU DON'T HAVE MORE FAITH IN YOURSELF, YOU WON'T SEE THINGS THAT YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO.
ANYWAY, YOU CAN HEAD BACK, IF YOU WANT. I'LL JUST GO ALONE.
FORGET IT, I'M GOING WITH YOU!
AREN'T YOU THE ONE WHO SAYS WE'RE COMPLETE ONLY WHEN WE'RE TOGETHER?
OKAY, JUST TELL ME WHERE'S MASAYUKI LIVES.
IT'S NOT LIKE YOU TO TALK TOUGH LIKE THAT.
WE REALLY HAVE CHANGED, HAVEN'T WE?
YEAH, YOU'RE RIGHT.
I GUESS I'M JUST WORN OUT FROM THE LONG SEARCH FOR MY OTHER HALF.

WELL, WAKYO, YOU CAN COUNT ON ME.
HEH HEH
OH, YEAH ?
WHO IS THIS WISE-GUY, ANY-WAY?
I DON'T KNOW ABOUT THAT, BUT YOU MIGHT AS WELL BE THERE.
OKAY, WE'RE ALMOST THERE.
MAKE A LEFT UP THERE. IT'S RIGHT AROUND THE CORNER.



HUGE
PLACE OF
CURSE

SO, YOU HAVE ARRIVED. DO YOU AT LAST DESIRE TO BECOME MY DISCIPLES?
WAUGH!
!?
HEY, HEY--YOU HEARD IT, RIGHT? GARAI'S VOICE?
WH-WHERE?!
OH MAN, YOU REALLY CAN'T SEE HIM.

SORRY TO DISAPPOINT YOU, BUT WE DIDN'T COME HERE TO BECOME YOUR DISCIPLES.
PUT YOUR COMPLETE TRUST IN ME. I WILL MAKE YOUR POWER GREATER THAN BISHU'S.
LET'S CUT THE BULL! LEAVE MASAYUKI'S BODY-- NOW!!
IS THAT RIGHT--YOU WANT ME TO GO?
AH HA
HA HA HA HA
WHA- WHAT'RE YOU LAUGHING AT?! WE KNOW YOU'VE TAKEN POSSESSION OF MASAYUKI!
KACHACK

!
MA-MASAYUKI.
HUH? I THOUGHT I HEARD SOMEBODY MAKING A RACKET OUT HERE. OKINO... AND IMAIZUMI, RIGHT?
IT BE
WELL, UH, ACTUALLY... HE, UH, SAID HE WANTS TO SEE YOUR GREEN-HOUSE.
SO, HEY, WHAT'S UP?!
LET IT BE
SHOVE
THEN, C'MON IN, LEMME SHOW YOU AROUND!
VANISHED AGAIN?
HUH?! NOT REAL--WELL, KINDA...
YEAH?! YOU INTO PLANTS, IMAIZUMI?

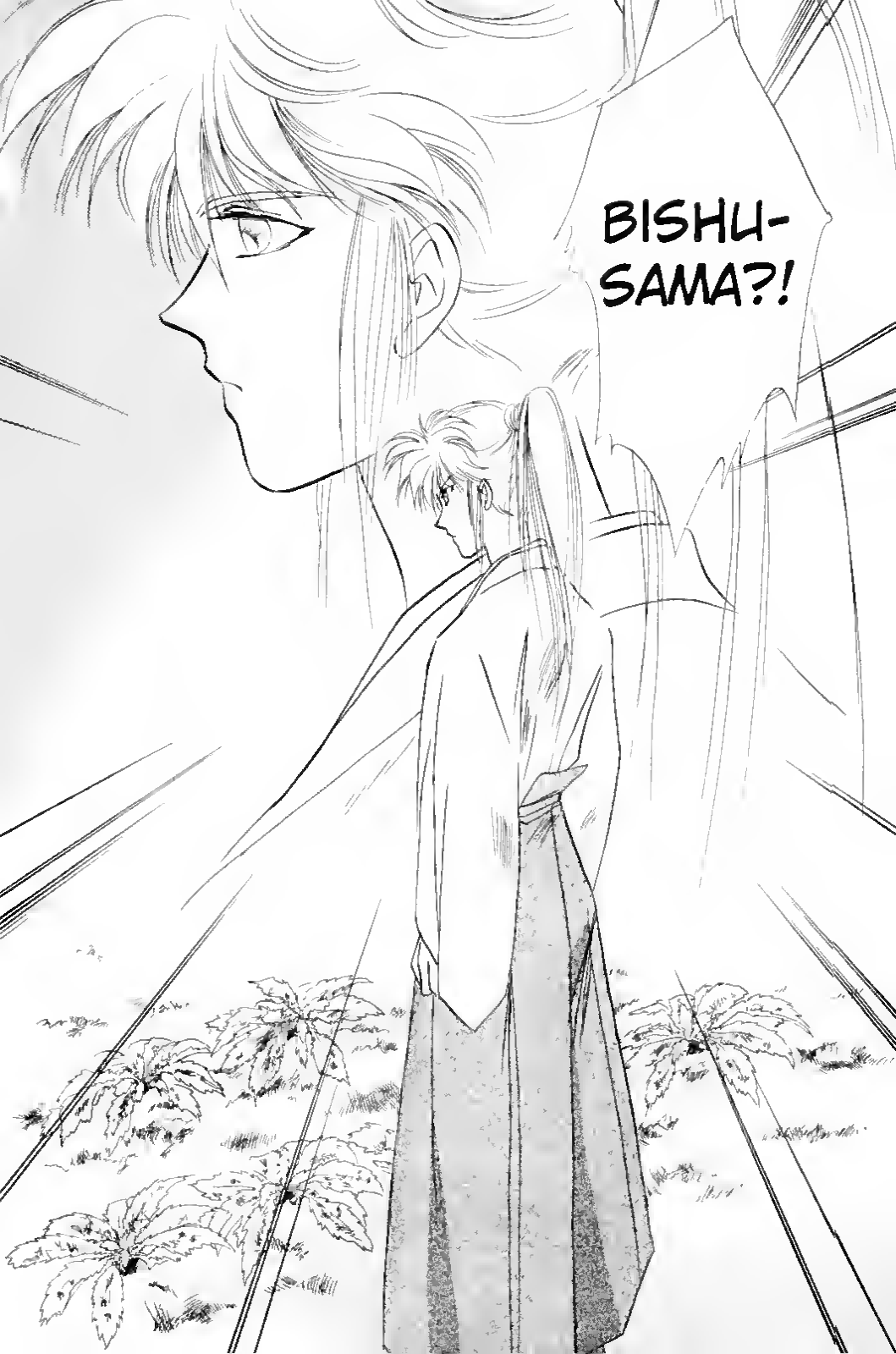
IS GARAI NEXT TO MASAYUKI?
WAKYO, I CAN'T SEE HIM. IT'S LIKE I SAID, HE'S TAKEN POSSESSION OF MASAYUKI.
YEAH, SO IT SEEMS.
LET IT BE
I MEAN, IF HE'S TAKEN POSSESSION OF HIM, WHY'D HE WANT TO ESCAPE?
GOOD POINT.
ESCAPE? GARAI?!
NO, CAN'T SEE HIM NOW. HE VANISHES THE SECOND MASAYUKI APPEARS, LIKE HE'S TRYING TO ESCAPE.
WHY IS THAT?
BUT, STILL, IF MASAYUKI'S AROUND, GARAI SHOWS UP.
ANYWAY, THIS IS IT.
WHAT'RE YOU GUYS MUTTERING ABOUT?

MAN, THIS IS SO AWESOME!
LET IT BE
SEEMS LIKE A SHAME TO DO IT, BUT WHEN YOU PUT GLADIOLAS IN A VASE, THEY'LL BLOOM ALL THE WAY TO THE TOP IF YOU PLUCK THREE OR FOUR BUDS.
PINK SILENE.
THESE ARE ORCHID POPPIES.
UH-HUH.
WOW, YOU'RE REALLY INTO FLOWERS, AREN'T YOU?
YOU SAW THE TALL ONES OUTSIDE, RIGHT?

GARAI--
HE'S
HERE.
HOW
CAN WE
FIGURE
OUT HIS
GAME?
DON'T
WORRY.
LEAVE
IT TO
ME.

GLASS AND MIRRORS REFLECT MORE THAN JUST PHYSICAL FORM.

THEY REFLECT EVERY-THING.
MEM-ORIES.
EMOTIONS, THE SOUL.
REALITY.
TIME.
WITH BISHU-SAMA'S VIOLET EYES, I SHOULD BE ABLE TO SEE.
BE CAREFUL, DUDE.
PANT!
SHUDDER
HUH?
SAKUYA?
SA-


BISHU-
SAMA?!

IF I JUST BEAR DOWN AND REALLY CONCEN-TRATE...
THIS WAS WHEN...
WAIT! WHOSE MEMORY AM I SEEING, ANYWAY?!
THE VILLAGERS CANNOT SURVIVE WITH FIELDS RAVAGED LIKE THIS.
THIS IS MY FATHER'S DOING.
CAN IT BE...
AND ME, TOO?
SAKUYA?

AHH...

BI-
BISHU-
SAMA?!
NOW
DO YOU
UNDER-
STAND?
HMM?
WH-
WHO'S
THERE?!

-TSK-
IMPRESSIVE, ISN'T IT? THAT MAGNIFICENT POWER, REINCARNATED IN THE FORM OF A PATHETIC HUMAN WEAKLING.
WATCHING YOU ALL DISGUSTS ME.
WASTING TIME WITH SUCH STUPID TRIFLES.
GA-GARAI...
MA-MASAYUKI IS BISHU-SAMA REINCARNATE?
AND WHEN HE REINCARNATED I TURNED THE TABLES AND TOOK POSSESSION OF HIM!
LIAR!
LIAR? WHY, YOU SAID SO YOURSELF.
I'VE TAKEN POSSESSION OF MASAYUKI.
IF MASAYUKI IS BISHU-SAMA, THAT'S SOMETHING ELSE. WE'RE TIRED OF YOUR GAMES! YOU'RE STILL UNDER THE CONTROL OF BISHU-SAMA.

YOU'D NEVER BE SATISFIED TO JUST TAKE POSSESSION OF A HUMAN!
YOU CAME AFTER US TO USE BISHU-SAMA'S POWER TO BREAK HIS CONTROL OF YOU--*DIDN'T YOU?!*
.....
HUMANS-- SIMPLE, STUPID HUMANS. AND YET HALF OF BISHU'S BLOOD CONSISTS OF THESE VULGAR, REVOLTING CREATURES.
BISHU IS INDEED A MAGNIFICENT CHARLATAN. OH, HE IS SUPERB!
BISHU'S POWER ISN'T SO FOR-MIDABLE.
HOW *DARE* YOU INSULT BISHU-SAMA!
-:HMPH!:- WHO NEEDS BISHU'S POWER?
SPEAKING OF WHICH, NEITHER OF YOU KNOWS THE TRUTH ABOUT BISHU'S POWER, DO YOU?
WHAT?!

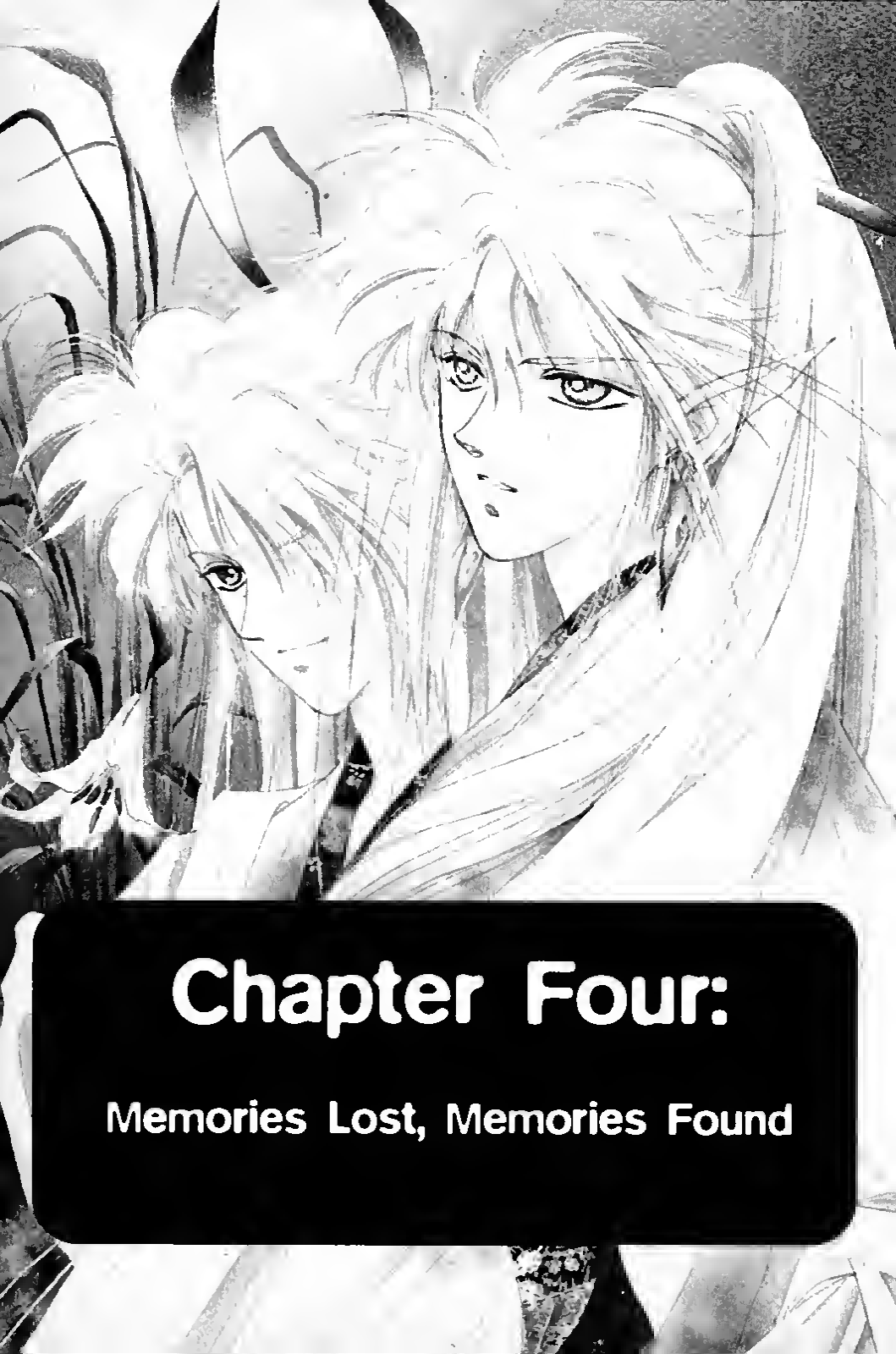
WHY ARE YOU ANGRY? I SPEAK ONLY THE TRUTH, YES?
NOW I WILL TELL YOU THE THING THAT BISHU HAS NEVER REVEALED.
BECAUSE I DO NOT WISH TO DECEIVE YOU, WAKYO.
I PRACTICED THE DARK ARTS ON HUMANS AND BISHU PURIFIED THEM. THIS I DID AT BISHU'S BEHEST.
YOU SEE, I PLAYED THE HIDEOUS MONSTER SO BISHU COULD WIN THE GRATITUDE OF HUMANS.
WAKYO, YOU MUST HEAR ME OUT!!
ALAS, I WHO WAS ONCE SUCH A COMPASSIONATE SPIRIT...
CAN ANYTHING BE CRUELER THAN A SON IMPRISONING THE LOVING FATHER WHO HELPED HIM?
OH, I MAY BE IMPRISONED, BUT IN THIS DIMENSION OF CONSCIOUSNESS, I AM THE ABSOLUTE MASTER.
STOP IT! ENOUGH OF YOUR LIES.
YOU WILL SUBMIT!!

BISHU-SAMA!!
SILENCE!!
MAKOTO?!
KSSH

ARE YOU ALRIGHT, IMAIZUMI? Y-YOU WEREN'T CUT BY ANY SHARDS OF GLASS?!
MAN, WHAT HAPPENED? THE GLASS JUST BROKE, ALL OF A SUDDEN!
BISHU-SAMA!
BISHU-SAMA...
MAKOTO?!
AH, BISHU-SAMA.
SA-SAKUYA...

I FELT THE GENTLE CARESS OF BISHU-SAMA'S POWER. I KNOW WHAT I FELT WAS NOT GARAI.
IN THIS WORLD, THE POWER IS SPLIT IN TWO AND RESIDES IN THIS BODY.
YOU'RE NOT HURT?
HAVE FAITH...

UH,... YEAH.
BISHU-SAMA...
OUR AWAKENING IS PROOF OF THE AWESOMENESS OF BISHU-SAMA'S POWER.
WE MUST HAVE FAITH IN OUR POWER.
WELL, THAT'S A RELIEF!
AND HAVE FAITH IN BISHU-SAMA.
WHEW
CHAPTER 3: END



Chapter Four:

Memories Lost, Memories Found

BISHU-SAMA IS A HALF-DEMON, HALF-HUMAN BEING.
IT IS BECAUSE BISHU-SAMA CAN SUMMON HIS DEMON BLOOD THAT HE POSSESSES THE POWER, BUT WE ARE MERE HUMANS FOR WHOM THE POWER WAS NEVER MEANT.
BISHU-SAMA IS THE ROOT OF THE POWER.
WE POSSESS HIS "FORM," AND WE POSSESS HIS "VISION" AND "VOICE," BUT SEPARATED INTO TWO.
HE ENTRUSTED THE POWER TO US ALONG WITH HIS WILL.
LIBRARY

AH, YES.
I CLEARLY REMEMBER.
HMM... I SEE.
?
BUT HOW DID BISHU-SAMA RELEASE THE POWER?
HOLD ON, WILL YA...
SA...KU...YA..., C'MON!

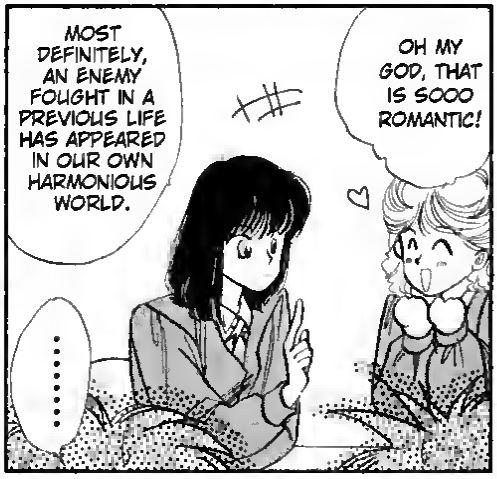
IT'S JUST THAT I WASN'T BORN WITHOUT MEMORY OF THE LAST WORLD LIKE YOU WERE.
BUT I KNOW HOW ANXIOUS YOU FEEL WITH GARAI AROUND.
IT'S NO USE TRYING TO WORK OUT EVERYTHING AT ONCE, WAKYO.
HMMM, LIKE THIS, I WONDER?
GARAI
WAKYO — SAKURA
BISHU
.....

BUT THE BLANK SPACES HAVE LED US ASTRAY. AND THERE'S NOTHING WE CAN DO ABOUT THEM NOW.
DON'T WORRY. I'VE GOTTEN ALL THE MAIN POINTS.
GIVE ME A BREAK.
JUST HOW STRONG IS BISHU-SAMA'S POWER?
EVEN I DON'T UNDER-STAND IT ALL.
I REALLY DON'T KNOW.

IT WAS SO TERRIFYING...
LOOKIT, PURPLE EYES!
HE'S GOT PURPLE EYES!
YOU'RE A KILLER!!
B-BUT, I...
YOU'RE CREEPY! STAY AWAY FROM ME, YOU FREAK!
KILLER!
?

HEY, IT'S OKINO AND THE NEW GUY, IMAIZUMI!
SOME-THING WRONG, WAKYO?
WHOA, SAME FACE!!
SQUINT
GET OUTTA HERE
NO, NO... I'M AL-RIGHT.
SURPRISED TO SEE YOU AROUND HERE, OKINO.
HI, SA-KURAI.
OH, MY GOD! YOU'RE, LIKE, TOTALLY IDENTICAL!!
C'MON, YOU GUYS REALLY ARE TWINS, AREN'T YOU?
YEAH, ME TOO!
SHHH
LIKE, DIDN'T YOUR PARENTS GET DIVORCED AND SPLIT YOU UP? I'VE HEARD THAT STUFF HAPPENS.
I, FOR ONE, DO BELIEVE IN KARMA FROM PAST LIVES.

AND YOU TWO ARE WARRIORS WHO HAVE COME TO VANQUISH HIM!


OH MY GOD, THAT IS SOOO ROMANTIC!
MOST DEFINITELY, AN ENEMY FOUGHT IN A PREVIOUS LIFE HAS APPEARED IN OUR OWN HARMONIOUS WORLD.
.....

HEY, CHILL OUT.
SA-SAKUYA!!

GET OUT!!
HMM... YOU KNOW US ALMOST TOO WELL.

BAM
HUH?!
.....
C'MON, THEY'RE NOT GONNA FIGURE IT OUT.
HEY, IMAIZUMI-- WHERE'RE YOU GOING?
I CAN'T JUST SIT AROUND LISTENING TO THIS FOOLISHNESS.
HEY, WAKYO, WHAT GIVES? WAIT UP!
IMAIZUMI!
SLAM
WHAT'S WITH HIM?

WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH YOU? YOU'RE ACTING WEIRD.
WHAP
I SAID, WAIT!!
WHY'RE YOU GETTING ALL BENT OUTTA SHAPE?
ACTING WEIRD? WHAT ABOUT YOU?
YOU'RE TELLING ME NONE OF THIS SCARES YOU?

C'MON, WAKYO, I KNOW THAT.
BELIEVE ME, I KNOW JUST HOW MUCH I'M NOT BISHU-SAMA.
RRRR!!
WHAT?!
YOU'VE GOT SOME NERVE, MAN.
WE'RE...
WE'RE NOT BISHU-SAMA.

KNOCK IT OFF! THE REASON I CAN'T SEE GARAI IS BECAUSE I DON'T HAVE BISHU-SAMA'S VISION.
THAT'S GOT NOTHING TO DO WITH IT.
I MEAN, IT'S WHY IT TOOK YOU SO LONG TO WAKE UP!
AND IT'S WHY YOU CAN'T SEE GARAI, TOO!
YOU'VE INHERITED HALF OF BISHU-SAMA'S POWER, JUST LIKE ME.
SO YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO SEE HIM, TOO!
-:TSK:- MAN, IF YOU'RE GONNA BE LIKE THAT--GO THROW YOUR TEMPER TANTRUM BY YOURSELF.
ANYWAY, EVEN IF I CAN'T SEE HIM, I CAN STILL DO GREAT THINGS WITH BISHU-SAMA'S POWER.

WHY'S HE BEING SUCH A WUSS?
-:HMPH:- COME TO THINK OF IT, HE'S ALWAYS BEEN LIKE THAT.
HEY, SAKURAI!
OH, I'D RATHER NOT GET INTO THAT AGAIN.
OKINO-KUN?
OKAY, WHAT WERE YOU, OF ALL PEOPLE, DOING IN THE LIBRARY ANYWAY?

BISHU'S VOICE---
THIS.
YOU HAVE SUCH A BEAUTIFUL VOICE. YES.
HUH?

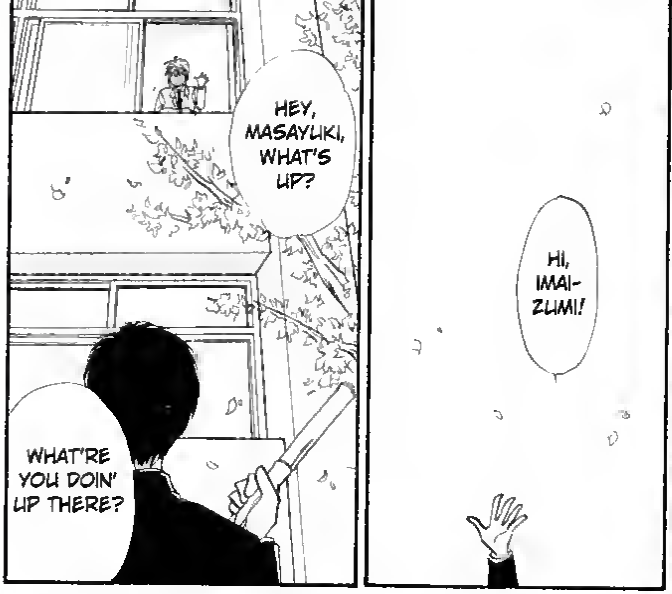
BISHUUUU...
!
OH, WH-WHAT HAPPENED?
UH...

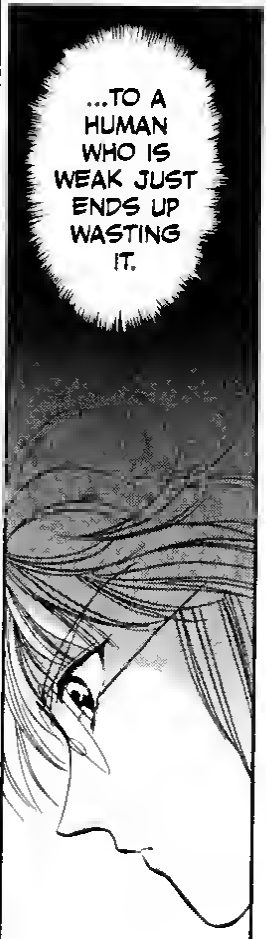
.....
OKINO-KUN...YOU GOING HOME?
WHAT HAPPENED JUST NOW?
WAS THAT THE WORK OF DEMONS?
HAS HE BROKEN FREE OF BISHU-SAMA'S BONDAGE?!

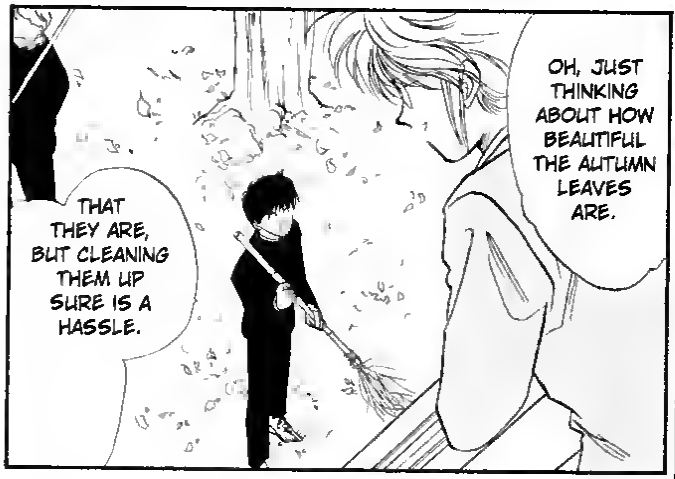
AH, IT IS ACCOM-PLISHED.
WHO IS THIS BENEFACTOR WITH POWER SO AWESOME AS TO BREAK BISHU'S BONDS?
A POWER PERHAPS EVEN GREATER THAN OUR EXALTED LORD GARAI.
FOR MANY EONS, WE HAVE ENDURED BONDAGE...
AND NOW I BURN WITH ANTI-CIPATION.
WHY?
DO YOU MEAN TO SAY YOU HAVE ALREADY FOUND BISHU?

...WE SHALL SNUFF OUT BISHU'S MISERABLE EXISTENCE.
JUST AS I PROMISED.
NOW, IN EXCHANGE FOR OUR FREEDOM...
.....
LOOKS LIKE IT'S MASAYUKI'S TURN TO CLEAN UP THE COURTYARD.
NO!

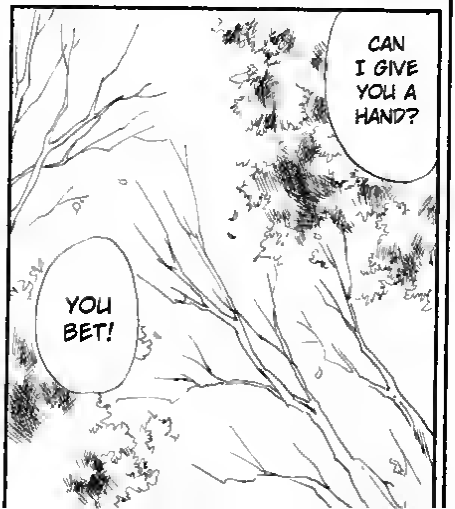
I CAN'T GIVE UP! I-I CAN'T!
NO, MAKE IT GO AWAY!!
I THOUGHT IF I FOUND SAKUYA--FOUND MY MISSING PIECE--THEN ALL MY FEARS WOULD GO AWAY.
.....
I CAN'T LOSE CONTROL...
...I HAVE TO BE STRONG ALL THE TIME.
GIVING BISHU-SAMA'S POWER...
WHY DID BISHU-SAMA GIVE HIS PRECIOUS POWER TO SOMEONE LIKE HIM?
BUT HE'S JUST MADE THINGS EVEN WORSE.



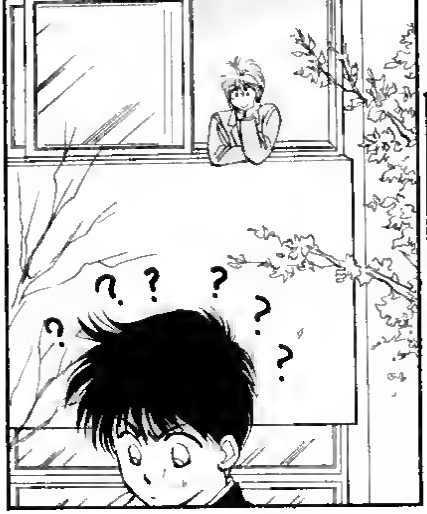




MASAYUKI IS BISHU-SAMA REINCARNATED IN HUMAN FORM.



PRECIOUS BISHU-SAMA...
.....
TO BE HONEST, I STILL CAN'T BELIEVE IT'S HIM.
HUH?
...


? ? ? ? ? ?

HEY! IT'S ALL CLEANED UP ALREADY...

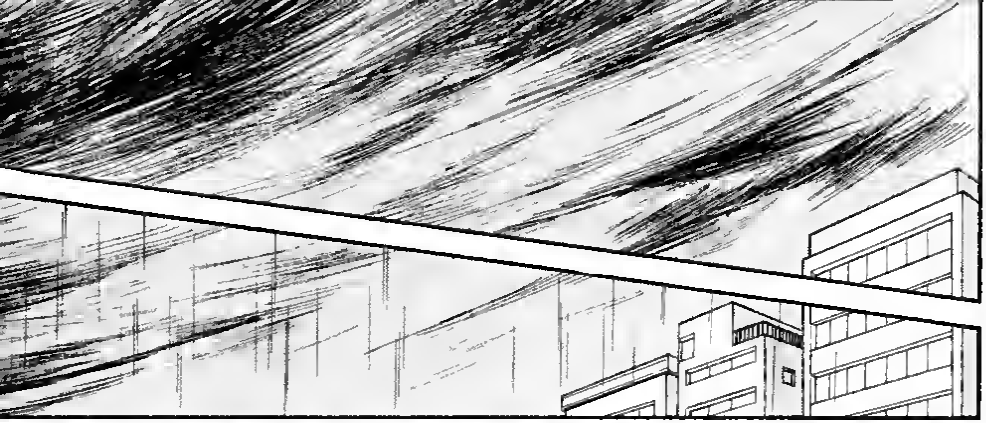
THIS IS NO JOKE, MAN.
SLAM

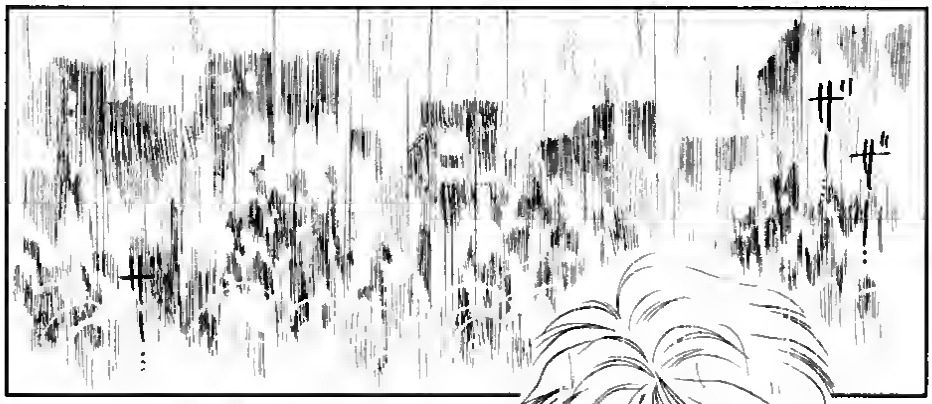
I DON'T CARE IF I CAN'T SEE.
IF I CAN *FEEL* THIS CREEPY VIBE, I'LL KNOW.
SAKUYA, MY FRIEND...
YOU ARE IN IT *DEEP*.
BISHU...

SO IT IS.
BEHOLD! THE ABOMINATION!
KILL HIM! KILL BISHU!
IT IS BISHU.

I WONDER IF WAKYO FEELS IT, TOO?

. . . . .
SCREEAAKK
UGH... SOMETHING MOVED. ARE THEY HERE?
AND SO SOON...?





BRRR!

AH, IS IT THE MIGHTY BISHU THAT I SEE TREMBLING BEFORE ME?
TO FRIGHTENED TO TAKE ANOTHER STEP?
HMPH, HOW PATHETIC.
THAT VOICE...
YOU MUST BE THE HAG KUGUNO, ONE OF GARAI'S REJECTED FEMALES.

!
THIS RAIN'S GONNA FOUL UP THAT MAKEUP YOU GOT PLASTERED ON, AIN'T IT, YOU OLD HAG?
REJ--
-:TSK, TSK:- I'M SO DISAPPOINTED TO HEAR SUCH LANGUAGE FROM THAT PRETTY MOUTH.
DID YOU REINCARNATE INTO A CREATURE SO BASE?
SCCCRRIKK
BISHU-SAMA, YOU ARE SUCH A GOOD BOY.

THAT VOICE.
WELL WHAT EVER WILL YOU DO NOW, BISHU-SAMA?
WHY DON'T YOU UNLEASH YOUR MAGNIFICENT POWER AGAINST ME?
SAY IT. I WANT TO HEAR YOU UTTER ONCE MORE THE INCANTATION THAT EVOKES OUR BONDAGE.

KAZUKI OKINO (AGE 17) A.K.A. SAKUYA INHERITED THE APPEARANCE, VOICE, AND DEMONIC POWERS OF HIS MASTER BISHU. BUT HIS BELATED AWARENESS OF HIS IDENTITY PREVENTS HIM FROM RECOVERING HIS POWER FULLY. HE IS GRADUALLY REGAINING AWARENESS. HE HAS A STRONG SENSE OF RIGHT AND WRONG, BUT ALSO HAS THE HABIT OF NOT THINKING DEEPLY ENOUGH ABOUT THINGS.

MAN, IT'S REALLY POURING.
THE WEATHER REPORT SAID IT WASN'T GONNA RAIN.
AND I GOT OUT TOO LATE TO BEAT IT.
WELL, GOOD THING I HAD A SPARE UMBRELLA HANDY.
....

WH-
WHAT?!
CLATTER
!
IMAIZUMI?!
-:ULP:-

WHERE...
WHERE IS THE RUPTURE...
MAN, THE RAIN MESSES UP MY VISION. I CAN'T SEE.
STRANGE...

WAKYO'S MEMORY WAS THAT NOW IS NOT THE TIME THE BONDS WILL BE BROKEN.
SO WHY HAVE BONDS THAT CAN ONLY BE OVERCOME WITH BISHU-SAMA'S POWER BEEN BROKEN?
THAT CAN'T BE DONE WITHOUT POWER EQUAL TO BISHU-SAMA'S-- OR WITHOUT A POWER EVEN STRONGER.
A POWER GREATER THAN BISHU-SAMA'S?
OUR POWER STILL ISN'T STRONG ENOUGH ANYWAY.
AND SAKUYA...
THAT'S NOT SOMETHING THAT EXISTS IN THIS WORLD.
I HOPE I'M JUST IMAGINING.

WONDER IF THAT IDIOT'S OKAY?
WONDER IF SOMETHING HAPPENED TO HIM?
I DON'T CARE HOW IMMATURE HE IS...THERE'S NO WAY HE COULDN'T HAVE PICKED UP THOSE WEIRD SIGNALS.
IDIOT! WHAT THE HELL DO YOU THINK YOU'RE DOING? TELL ME WHERE YOU'RE AT-- NOW!
CALL OUT TO ME!
IMAIZUMIIII!!

AAAHHH-_
SPLAT
OWWW !!

MA-MASAYAKI, GET OFF ME, MAN!
ドンBOFF
HUH?
OOF!
YOU IDIOT!! WHAT THE HECK ARE YOU THINKING?!
THEY JUST CLEANED THESE RAILINGS!
AND THE RAIN MAKES 'EM EVEN MORE SLIPPERY!!
WHAT IF YOU SLIPPED AND FELL, HUH?! WHAT IF YOU FELL?!

WELL, ANYWAY, LET'S HURRY UP AND GET INSIDE.
YOU'LL CATCH A COLD.
OH!
OH MY GOD, YOU'D'A BEEN KILLED!
A-CHOO
SNUFFLE...
MASAYUKI.
WHAT'S SO FUNNY?!
WOW, I NEVER SAW BISHU-SAMA GO AFTER SOMEBODY LIKE THAT.

DO NOT SET ONE FOOT OUTSIDE THIS SCHOOL.

HUH?

IMAIZUMI, Y-YOUR EYES...
OH, UH...

AHHH...
LOOK, I'LL TELL YOU WHAT'S GOING ON LATER.
HUH?
THE RAIN'S STILL COMING DOWN. LET'S JUST GO INSIDE, OKAY?
MAN!
JUST DON'T GO OUTSIDE.
IMAIZUMI?

THE SCHOOL WON'T NECESSARILY BE SAFE, THOUGH.

IF WE SLIP UP AND AROUSE GARAI FROM HIS BONDAGE WITHIN MASAYUKI...
...THEN IT'S ALL OVER. THERE'S NOTHING WE CAN DO TO STOP IT FROM ALL COMING DOWN.

ACK!
WHAT'S WRONG, BISHU?
YOU WISH TO SPEAK BUT THE WORDS WON'T COME, HMMM?
HOW PA-THETIC.
-:TSK:- NOT THE SLIGHTEST BIT OF RESISTANCE.
SURELY *THIS* CANNOT BE THE POWER THAT HELD US SO IN THRALL?

ACK...
SAY WHAT YOU WANT, YOU OLD HAG! I HAVEN'T RECOVERED ALL MY POWER YET.
OWWW!
OUCH
UGH!
THWACK
KUGUNO?!
HEY, YOU OLD HAG, WHERE'D YOU GO?!
KU-KUGUNO?!

WHERE'D YA RUN OFF TO?!
WHY'D YA STOP?!
.....
HMPH, YOU ARE NOT BISHU.
.....

DON'T BE STUPID.
I MUST PROTECT BISHU-SAMA.
SO THAT'S IT SHE'S AFTER BISHU-SAMA. I CAN'T LET HER FIND OUT I'M A PHONY.
WHAT ABOUT ME ISN'T BISHU?
SOMETHING IS INDEED NOT RIGHT.
YOU'VE GOT HUMAN EYES, AND BESIDES THE FACE AND VOICE, NOTHING IS RIGHT.
WHY DOES A HUMAN LIKE YOU HAVE SUCH A FACE?
WHAT ARE YOU?
WELL, BE THAT AS IT MAY...
...WHETHER YOU ARE BISHU OR NOT, THERE IS BUT ONE THING I NEED TO DO.
.....

IMAIZUMI'S EYES WERE DEFINITELY VIOLET.
SO, WHAT I *THOUGHT* I SAW WHEN WE FIRST MET WAS DEFINITELY NO MISTAKE.
THE THING WE ALWAYS DO TO PESTS.
EX-TERMINATE THEM.

IF YOU THINK IT'S SO ODD, WHY DOESN'T IT OCCUR TO YOU TO GO *AFTER* HIM, IDIOT.
KONK
HMM
HMM
BAH! NO MOTIVATION. NO MOTIVATION AT ALL.
HMM, WHAT WAS THAT COMMOTION ALL ABOUT?
THIS TRIES MY PATIENCE.
WHY MUST I--THE EXALTED GARA!--ENDURE LANGUISHING IN A PLACE SUCH AS THIS?
I WONDER WHY?

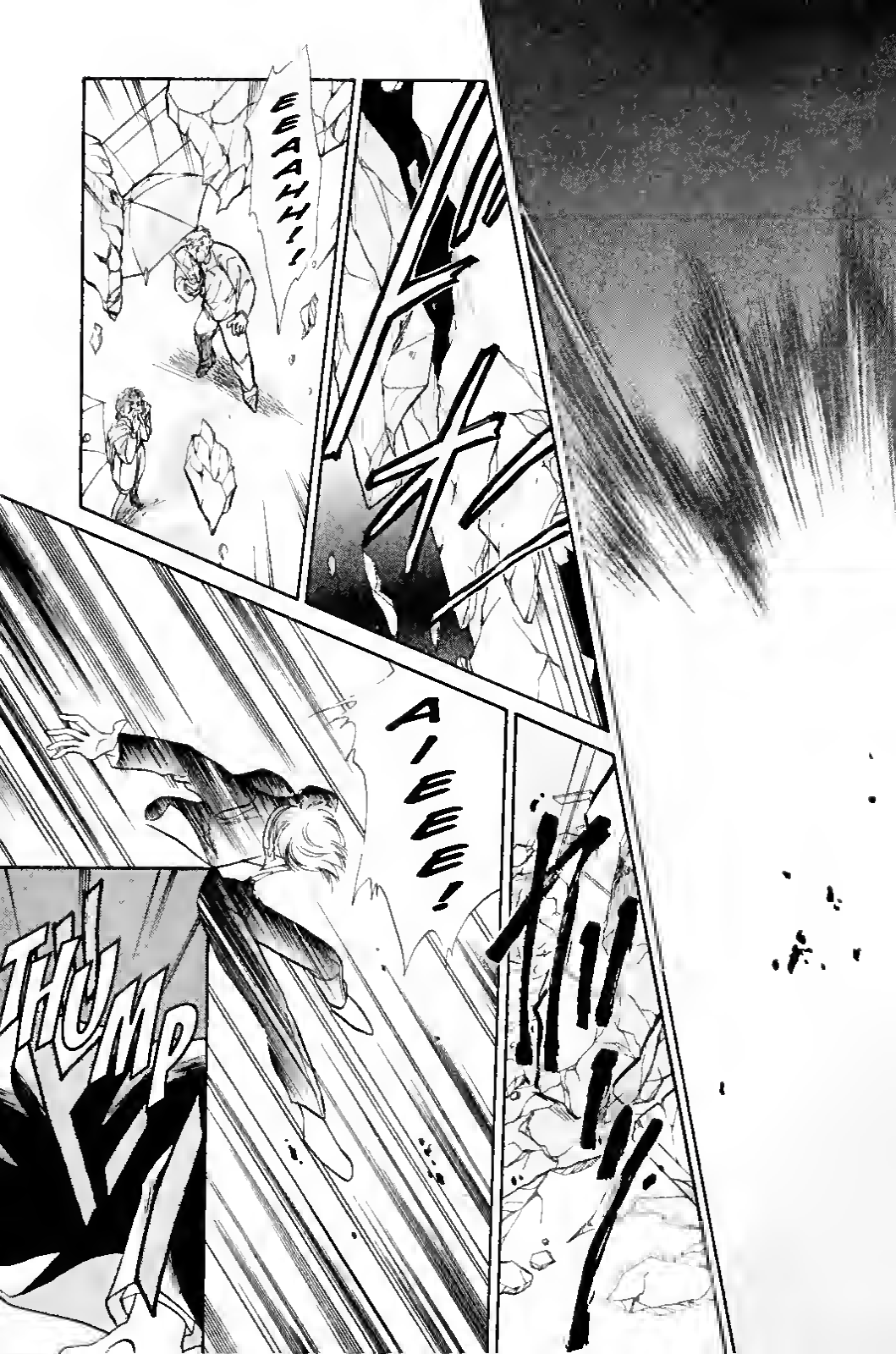
IF I HAD BISHU'S POWER I COULD EXTRICATE MYSELF FROM HERE IN AN INSTANT...
GLORP
AAGGHH!
HUMANS ARE SO FRAGILE. I WONDER WHAT HAPPENS IF WE DROP ONE FROM, OH, ABOUT THERE.

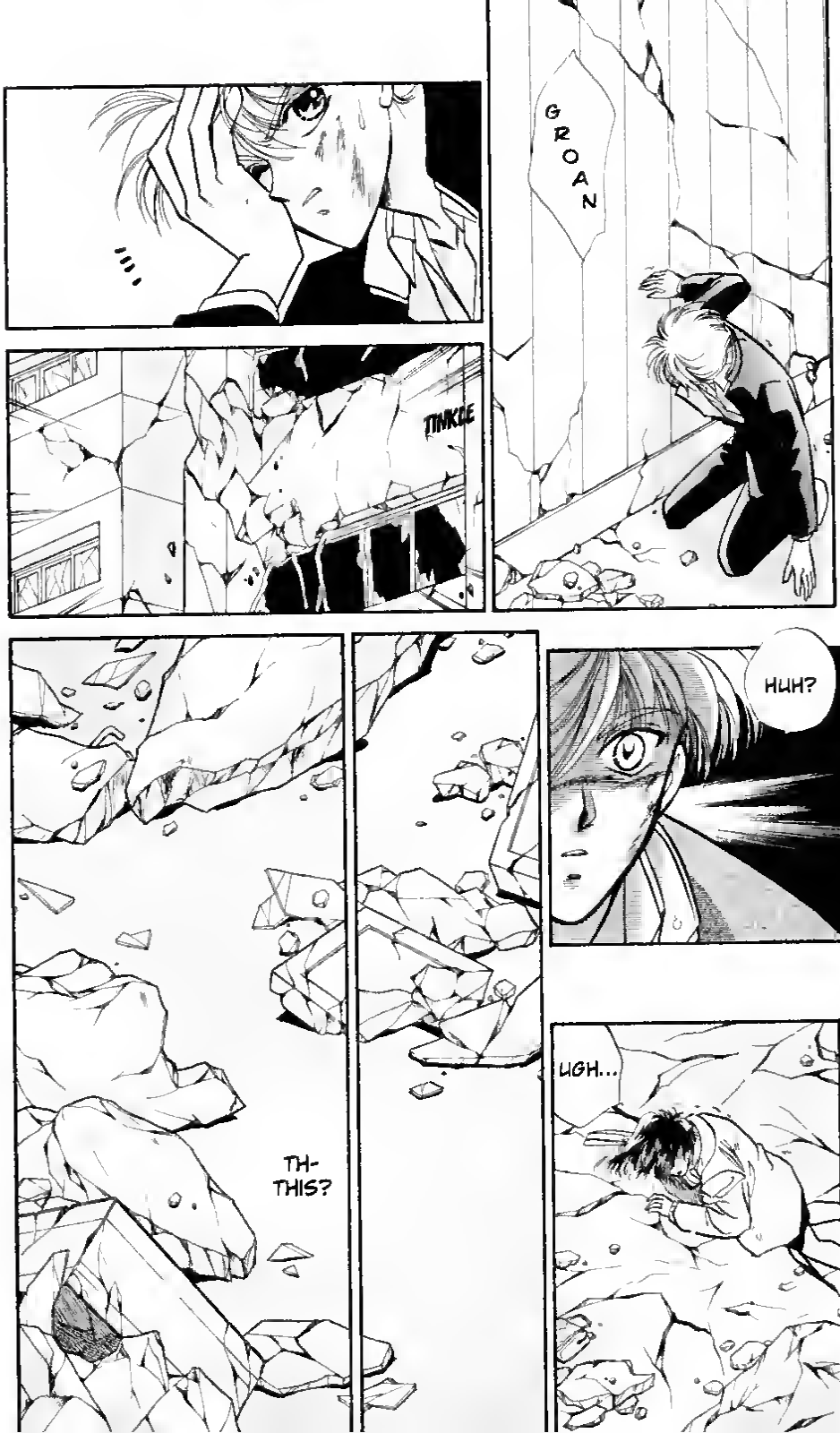
!
HEY, I SEE SOME-BODY!
I DON'T BELIEVE THIS!
I REFUSE TO GET BEATEN BY THAT SMALL FRY!
I WONDER...
...IS THERE A SPIRIT FIELD AROUND ME?
RATTLE
SPLASH
YOU CAN'T SEE ME?!
LOOK AT THIS RAIN. IT DOESN'T LOOK ABOUT TO LET UP.
SPLASH

PUT ON A NICE SHOW FOR ME AND WHO KNOWS--MAYBE I'LL SPARE YOU.
TO SEE FEAR IN *THAT* FACE. BEG! GO AHEAD. BEG FOR YOUR LIFE!
SHE KNOWS I'M NOT BISHU-SAMA, AND IF HE WERE ACTUALLY TO APPEAR, I'D BE DONE FOR.
BUT, IF THAT'S THE CASE, WHAT I HAVE TO DO IS EASY, EVEN IF I CAN'T SEE KUGUNO.
I JUST HAVE TO PUSH AGAINST THE FIELD AROUND ME!!
FOOM
WHAT?!

KOOOOM
D-
DAMN
YOU...!!

SAKUYA, NO!!


EEAAHH!
AIEEE!
THUMP


GROAN
TINKLE
HUH?
UGH...
TH-
THIS?

SWOOSH
SAKUYA!!
DID I DO ALL THIS?

W-
WAKYO...
INCREDIBLE!
I DIDN'T KNOW BISHU-SAMA POSSESSED SUCH DESTRUCTIVE POWER!!
BUT IT'S ALRIGHT-- I LIVED THROUGH IT.
SLAP
LIVED?! HOW DARE YOU BE SO CASUAL ABOUT THIS!!
AHH...

IT'S NOT YOUR FAULT...EVEN I DIDN'T REALIZE THE DEPTHS OF BISHU-SAMA'S POWER.
.....
HAD I LISTENED TO YOUR WARNING...
YOU'RE RIGHT. YOU HAVE EVERY REASON TO BE UPSET.
IT TRULY IS A DEMON'S POWER.
WEE-OOW
WEE-OOW

THERE'S NO DOUBT--WE'VE INHERITED HIS DEMONIC POWERS.
AH, THE RAIN'S ENDED.

GARAI-SAMA...
GARAI-SAMA...
WE YEARN TO BE IN THE PRESENCE OF OUR DARK LORD, GARAI-SAMA.
CHUNCK
I'D LIKE TO HEAD BACK SOON.
BUT, I CAN'T GO LIKE THIS. I'LL CATCH A COLD.
KERFLAP
WHERE'D THAT IMAIZUMI GO OFF TO, ANYWAY?

I AM GARAI.
HE SAID NOT TO GO ANYWHERE.
I WONDER IF HE'S EVEN GONNA COME BACK?

AND I...
...I AM YOUR LORD.

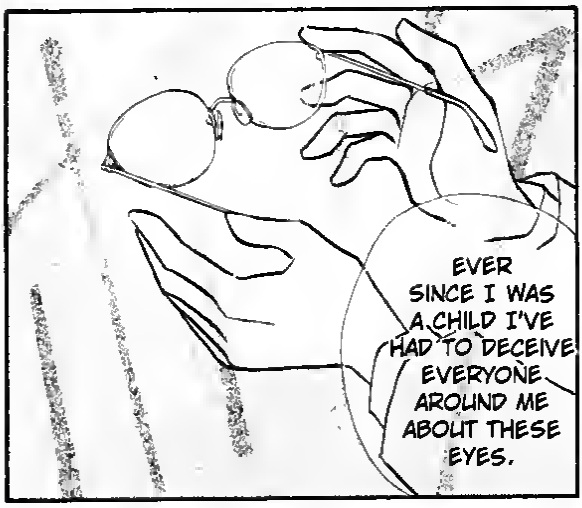
MAKOTO IMAIZUMI (AGE 17)
A.K.A. WAKYO
INHERITED THE APPEARANCE, VIOLET EYES AND DEMONIC POWERS OF HIS TEACHER AND MASTER, BISHU-SAMA. WHILE HE HAS UNBOUNDED RESPECT FOR BISHU-SAMA, UNHAPPY CHILDHOODS IN BOTH THIS WORLD AND THE LAST HAVE ENDOWED HIM WITH A DEEP HATRED OF SPIRIT WORLD BEINGS. AT FIRST GLANCE, HE COMES OFF AS EVEN-TEMPERED, BUT IS IN FACT DEEPLY EMOTIONAL AND COMPASSIONATE TOWARD OTHERS.

MASAYUKI'S WAITING FOR YOU?
WHAT FOR?
TAMP

MY EYES-- HE SAW THEM.
I TOLD HIM TO WAIT FOR ME AT SCHOOL AND I'D TELL HIM WHAT'S GOING ON WHEN I GOT BACK.

YOU WANT TO LET OUT THE *TRUTH* ABOUT US?!
GIVE ME A BREAK. I DON'T INTEND TO TELL HIM THE WHOLE STORY.

TELL 'IM WHAT'S GOING ON?


EVER SINCE I WAS A CHILD I'VE HAD TO DECEIVE EVERYONE AROUND ME ABOUT THESE EYES.

WELL, THEN *WHAT?* WHAT'RE YOU THINKING?

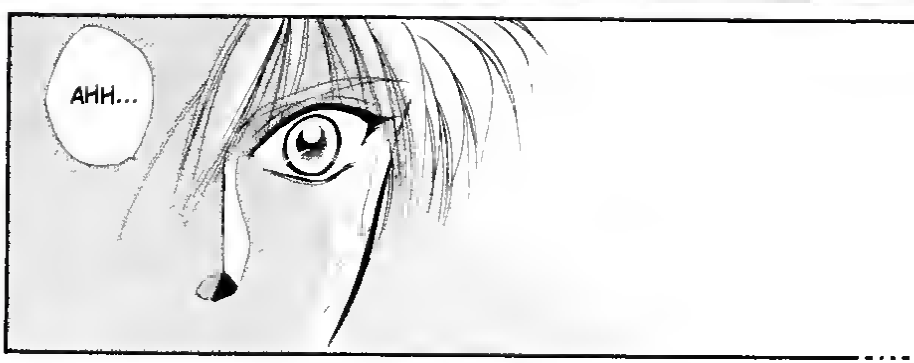
I DON'T KNOW IF PEOPLE REALLY BELIEVED ALL THAT STUFF, THOUGH.
IN A WAY, THAT'S HOW MY PARENTS RAISED ME TO ACT.
AFTER ALL, *THEY* HAD NO SHORTAGE OF EXCUSES...
THEY'D SAY FOREIGN BLOOD AMONG OUR ANCESTORS WAS THE REASON THIS TRAIT SUDDENLY APPEARED.
OR THEY'D SAY I HAD GOTTEN GRAVELY ILL AS A BABY AND THE MEDICINE I TOOK CAUSED MY EYES TO CHANGE COLOR.
AT BEST, THEY CONSIDERED THE CHILD THEY HAD MADE A FREAK...
...AND ALL THEIR LIES WERE MEANT TO SOMEHOW FOOL THEMSELVES.

-:TSK:- THOSE EYES...THEY GIVE ME THE CREEPS!!
HE'S LIKE A LITTLE DEMON.
STOP LOOKING AT ME!
DID I REALLY GIVE BIRTH TO THIS CHILD?
JUST LIKE A DEMON.
WAKYO ...?
SMIRK

I'M PREPARED TO SACRIFICE THIS BODY DOING BATTLE AGAINST MY ENEMIES.
"MAKOTO IMAIZUMI" MEANS NOTHING TO ME.
THAT'S "WAKYO'S" WISH.
IT IS THE BOUND DUTY OF HIS SUCCESSOR.
.....
YEAH, BUT...

I THINK THAT IN *THIS* WORLD *THIS* BODY IS PRECIOUS.
DON'T YOU THINK THAT'S KIND OF SAD?
HERE AND NOW, I *HAVE* TO BE OKINO KAZUKI--NOT SAKUYA.
.....
WAKYO!
YEAH, BUT WITH THAT ATTITUDE WE'LL NEVER BE ABLE TO FULFILL OUR ROLE, SAKUYA.

THAT IS THE ONE THING YOU MUST NEVER FORGET, SAKUYA.
WE ARE BISHU-SAMA'S SHADOW WARRIORS.


AHH...

BISHU-SAMA!
THIS IS WHAT WE ASKED OF HIM.
TO BE BISHU-SAMA'S SHADOW WARRIORS AND LIVE IN THE NEXT WORLD.
THAT IS WHY WE HAVE THIS FACE.
WE BEG YOU! WE WANT TO BE OF SERVICE TO BISHU-SAMA.
.....
PLEASE HAVE FAITH IN US.

BISHU-SAMA!
THE CYCLE OF BIRTH, DEATH, AND REBIRTH MEANS MEMORIES OF PAST LIVES ARE COMPLETELY IRRELEVANT TO HUMAN BEINGS.
BISHU-SAMA...
YOU ARE TOO PRECIOUS TO ME. I WILL NOT HAVE YOU BOUND BY SUCH A BURDEN IN THE NEXT WORLD.
SIGH

WELL, IF WE KEEP MASAYUKI WAITING MUCH LONGER, HE'LL CATCH A COLD.
WAKYO?
MAYBE WHAT YOU SAY IS CLOSER TO WHAT BISHU-SAMA WISHED FOR US.
WAKYO!
GRIP
IT WAS REALLY EASY FOR HER TO FIGURE OUT I WASN'T BISHU-SAMA.
WAKYO... I-I SLIPPED UP...
EVEN THOUGH I HAD NO CLUE ABOUT WHAT WAS GOING ON, I GOT FULL OF MYSELF... I THOUGHT I COULD HANDLE IT ALL. I-I COMPLETELY SCREWED UP.
FORGIVE ME, WAKYO.

I'VE FAILED-- FAILED AS A DISCIPLE!
IF ONLY...IF ONLY I HAD ACQUIRED MY POWER FOR THIS MOMENT MORE QUICKLY!
WHAT SHOULD I DO?! PLEASE TELL ME, WAKYO!
I WANT TO USE WHAT I HAVE IN A WAY THAT DOESN'T BURDEN YOU!
SAKU--
?!

D-DO YOU FEEL THAT?!
IT'S A RUPTURE IN THE SPIRIT FIELD. ARE DEMONS NEAR?!
!!
MASAYUKI!!
GARAI!!

!
MASAYUKI?!
WHERE IS HE?!
SNATCH
RUFFLE
DAMN IT!!

IF BISHU-SAMA'S BEEN SEIZED, WE'RE WORTHLESS.
HOW CAN WE CALL OURSELVES SHADOW WARRIORS?!
DAMN!
.....
DON'T WORRY.
MASAYUKI'S ALL RIGHT.
THEY WANT BISHU-SAMA'S LIFE!
HUH?

SO, WHAT DO YOU THINK GARAI'S GONNA DO TO US? HE'S FULL OF NOTHING BUT JEALOUS HATRED FOR BISHU-SAMA.
THERE'S NO WAY MASAYUKI'S ALL RIGHT.
I CAN'T SEE HOW THEY KNOW MASAYUKI IS BISHU-SAMA.
BESIDES, GARAI'S NOT GONNA KILL HIM.
WH-WHY?
?
YOU SEE, FOR GARAI...
...MASAYUKI'S DEATH WOULD LEAVE HIM ADRIFT.

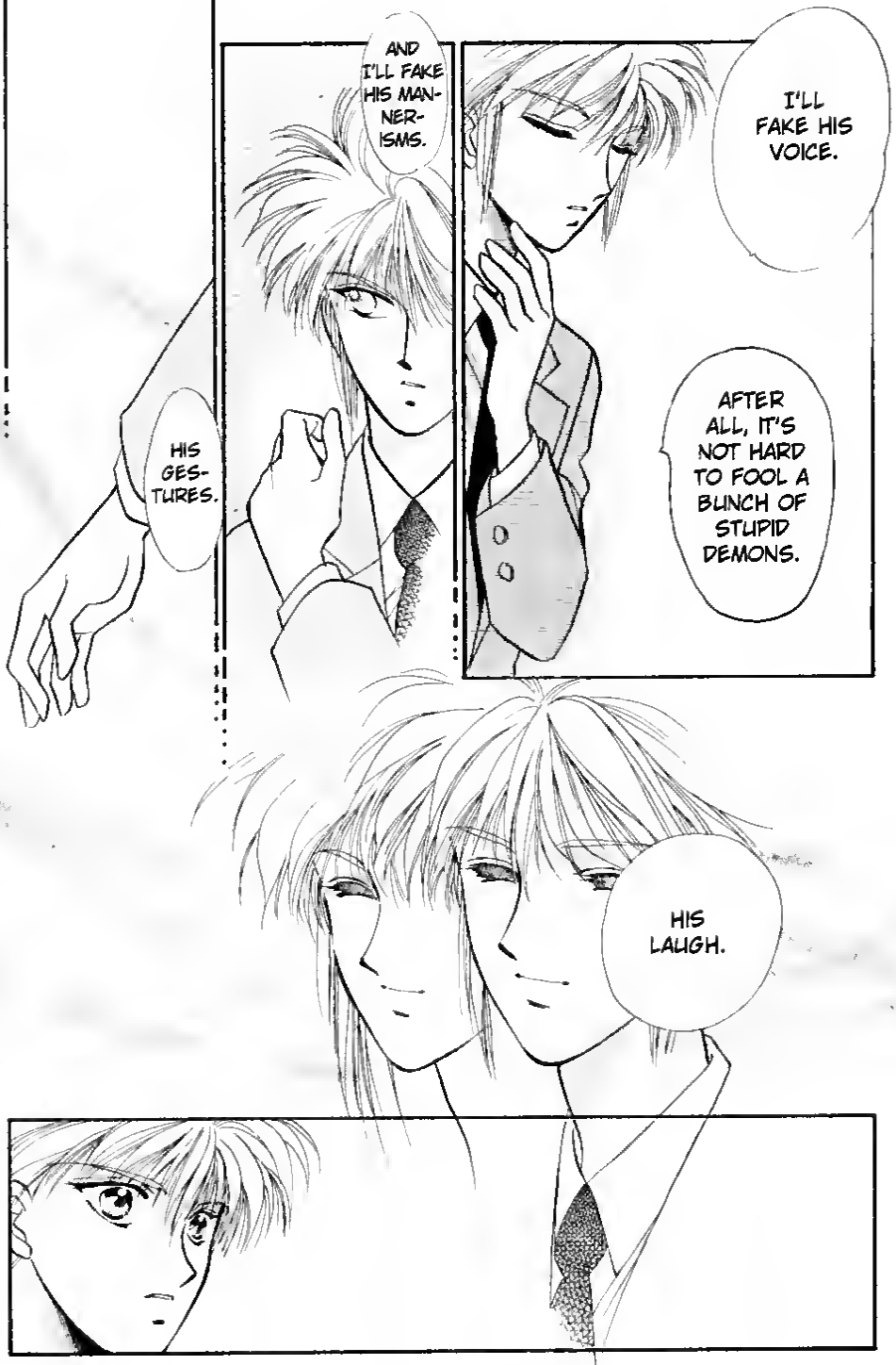
GARAI IS THE ONE WITH THE MOST TO FEAR...
...FROM MASAYUKI'S DEATH.
THAT'S BECAUSE DEMONS DON'T GO THROUGH THE BIRTH-REBIRTH CYCLE LIKE HUMANS.
SO, NOW BISHU-SAMA'S USING HIS POWER IN HIS REINCARNATED FORM TO KEEP GARAI IN BONDAGE.
HE'LL HAVE TO PASS EONS WITHIN MASAYUKI, UNABLE TO ESCAPE.
IF MASAYUKI DIES, GARAI ENDS UP TRAPPED INSIDE MASAYUKI WHEN HE TRANS-MIGRATES.
NOTHING COULD BE WORSE FOR GARAI.

NOTHING WORSE THAN HAVING A PART OF HIM THAT IS HUMAN.
SO, GARAI HAS TO PROTECT MASAYUKI, WHO'S BISHU-SAMA IN THIS WORLD.
THAT'S EXACTLY RIGHT.
AHA...
HA HA HA
WELL, I FEEL A LITTLE BETTER NOW.
JUST LEAVE IT TO BISHU-SAMA.
...
SNICKER
HEH

I'M REALLY GLAD THAT MASAYUKI'S OKAY. I MEAN, WHETHER OR NOT HE'S BISHU-SAMA'S REINCARNATION.
WELL, WE CAN'T RELAX YET, SAKUYA.
TO BREAK OUT OF BONDAGE, GARAI NEEDS BISHU-SAMA'S POWER-- THE POWER THAT *WE* POSSESS.
RIGHT, I KNOW.
AND I'M READY TO FIGHT!

HEARING THAT MAKES ME FEEL BETTER.
IS THAT RIGHT?
"BISHU" IS WHAT THEY'RE AFTER.
WE'RE GONNA STAY RIGHT WHERE WE ARE AND MAKE THEM COME TO US.
SO, HOW DO WE LOOK FOR MASAYUKI?
HUH?
IT'S OKAY. THERE IS ONE MORE SHADOW WARRIOR HERE.

MY MEMORY OF BISHU-SAMA IS MORE DISTINCT THAN YOURS.
AND I HAVE THESE EYES.
WAKYO...


I'LL FAKE HIS VOICE.
AND I'LL FAKE HIS MANNERISMS.
AFTER ALL, IT'S NOT HARD TO FOOL A BUNCH OF STUPID DEMONS.
HIS GESTURES.
HIS LAUGH.

I'LL TURN MYSELF INTO BISHU-SAMA.
WAKYO-- THAT'S CRAZY!
SHH! QUIET!
FWISH
?!
HMMM...
THEY'RE HERE!
HUH?!

Boo hoo hoo
!
UGH... I THINK I'M GONNA PUKE.
.....

W-WAKYO ...
THIS STILL ISN'T GONNA WORK.
GARAI MIGHT HAVE LET ON THAT WE'RE NOT REALLY BISHU.
WHAT?
MAYBE SO.
BUT STILL--IT'S US THEY'RE AFTER.
BISHU...
BISHU...
BISHU, WHERE ARE YOU...

MY NAME IS BISHU.
WHO CALLS MY NAME?

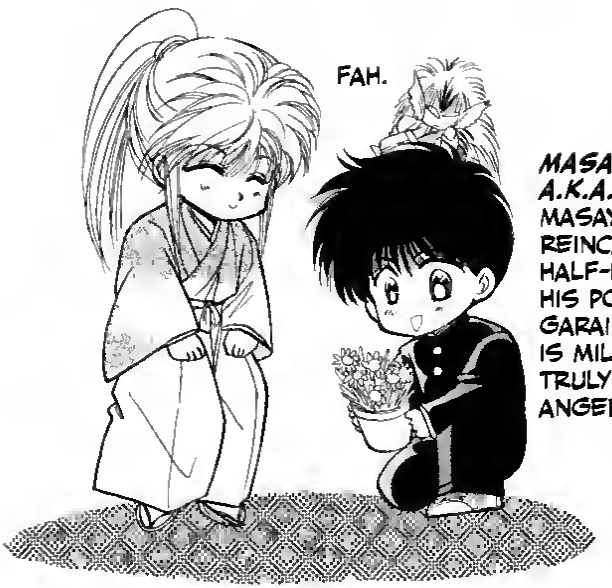
SPRONG!
BLORP
BISHU!
IN THE FLESH...
IT TRULY IS BISHU!
IT IS BISHU!

IT IS HE WHO HAS IMPRISONED US IN THE DEEPEST DEPTHS.
BISHU!!
.....

I CAN FEEL IT--I CAN FEEL THE REPULSIVE PRESENCE ENGULFING WAKYO.
BUT I CAN'T CLEARLY SEE IT!!
DAMN IT! IF ONLY I HAD MORE OF THE POWER...
.....
SA-KUYA...
DRIP

WAKYO!
?!
WAKYO!
WAKYO!

Y-YOU FOOL!
THUMP!
BAM
BAM
YOU CAN'T LEAVE ME BEHIND!
WAKYO!!



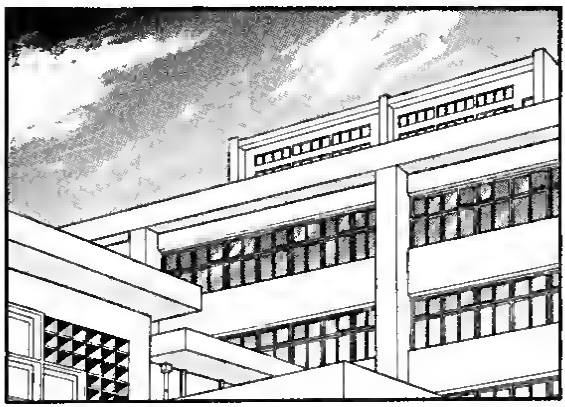
MASAYUKI KAGA (AGE 17) A.K.A. BISHU

MASAYUKI IS THE HUMAN REINCARNATION OF HALF-DEMON, HALF-HUMAN BISHU WHO USED HIS POWERS TO PUT HIS FATHER GARA! INTO BONDAGE. WHILE HE IS MILD TEMPERED, HE CAN BE TRULY TERRIFYING WHEN ANGERED.

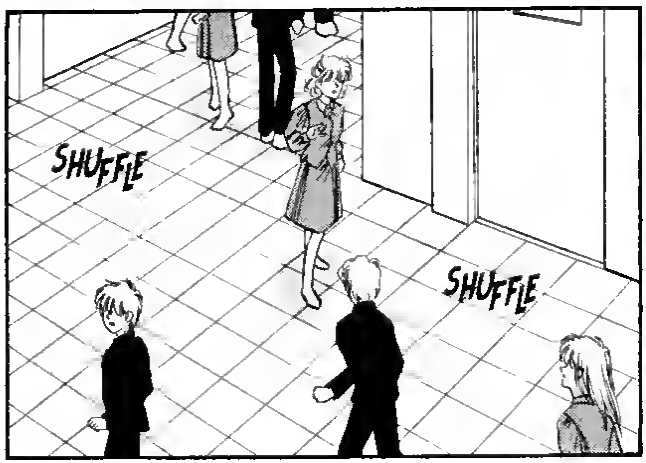
SPECIAL THANKS TO: SAYURI.N MIYUKI.O SHIHO.M

AROUND 7:00 A.M. YESTERDAY, A MASSIVE EXPLOSION OCCURRED AT TOKYO'S YAYOI STATION, CAUSING EXTENSIVE DAMAGE.
THE STILL UNKNOWN CAUSE IS SUSPECTED TO BE THE RESULT OF A GAS LEAK.
PEOPLE IN THE AREA ARE ADVISED TO EXERCISE EXTREME CAUTION.
PERHAPS IT'S THE WORK OF EXTREMISTS-- OR SLOPPY ENGINEERING.
.....

MIRACULOUSLY, THERE WERE NO FATALITIES AND ONLY MINOR INJURIES REPORTED, AS DUE TO RAIN, FEW PEDESTRIAN WERE PRESENT.
IT WAS NO MIRACLE ...
IT'S BECAUSE WAKYO KEPT EVEN WORSE FROM HAPPENING.



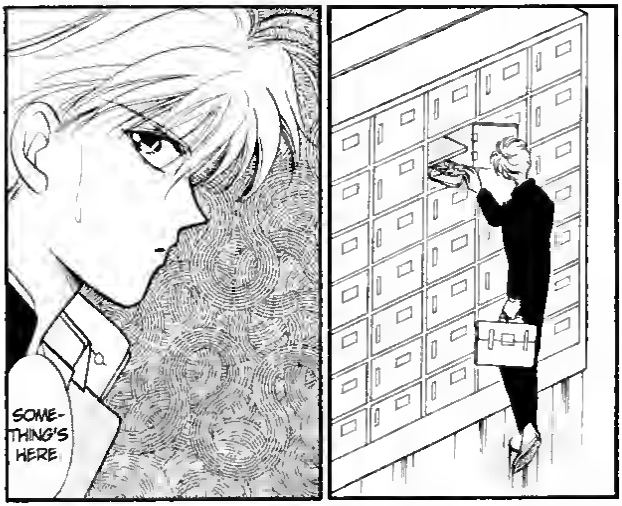
WAKYO... WAKYO, WHAT HAPPENED TO YOU?

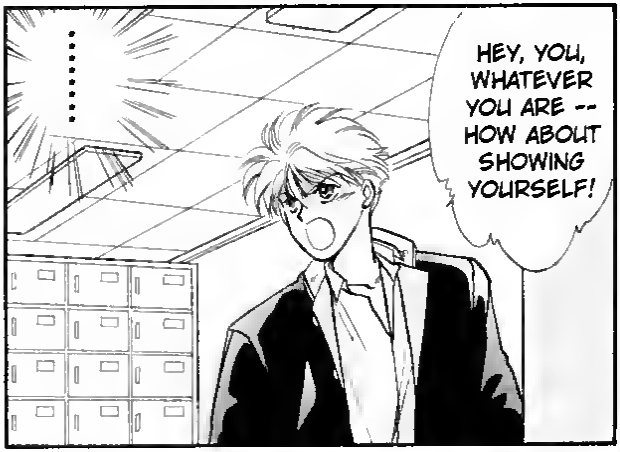

SHUFFLE
SHUFFLE

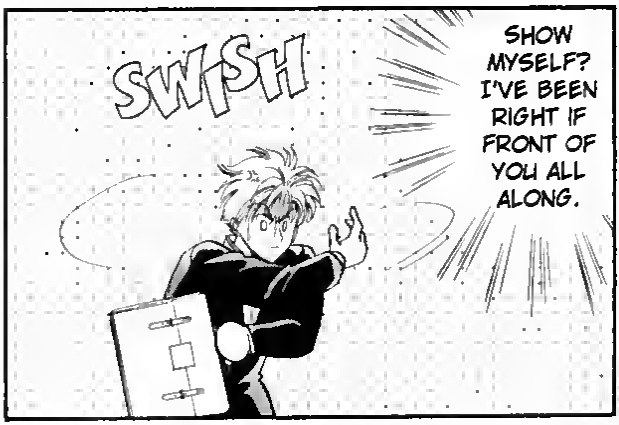
WHAT'S GOING ON?
IT'S KAGA'S PARENTS.
HE NEVER CAME HOME YESTERDAY.
HE'S BEEN DECLARED MISSING. EVEN THE POLICE HAVE GOTTEN INVOLVED.
COULDA BEEN KIDNAPPED, THE WAY HIS HEAD'S ALWAYS IN THE CLOUDS.
ANYWAY, I HOPE THEY FIND HIM SOON.
HEY, OKINO. YOU'RE LOOKING AWFULLY PALE.
HUH...? NAH...

WHETHER WE LIKE IT OR NOT, THE ACTIONS WE TAKE THAT AFFECT THIS WORLD AFFECT THE LIVES OF INNOCENT PEOPLE, TOO.
IF WE DON'T DO SOMETHING, AND DO IT SOON...
IT'S NOTHING, I'M OKAY...
HEY, THAT TRANSFER GUY, IMAIZUMI? HE DIDN'T COME TO SCHOOL TODAY EITHER.
WHISPER
GULP
HE'S TRUANT. THEY CALLED HIS HOUSE, BUT THEY DON'T KNOW ANYTHING EITHER.
.....

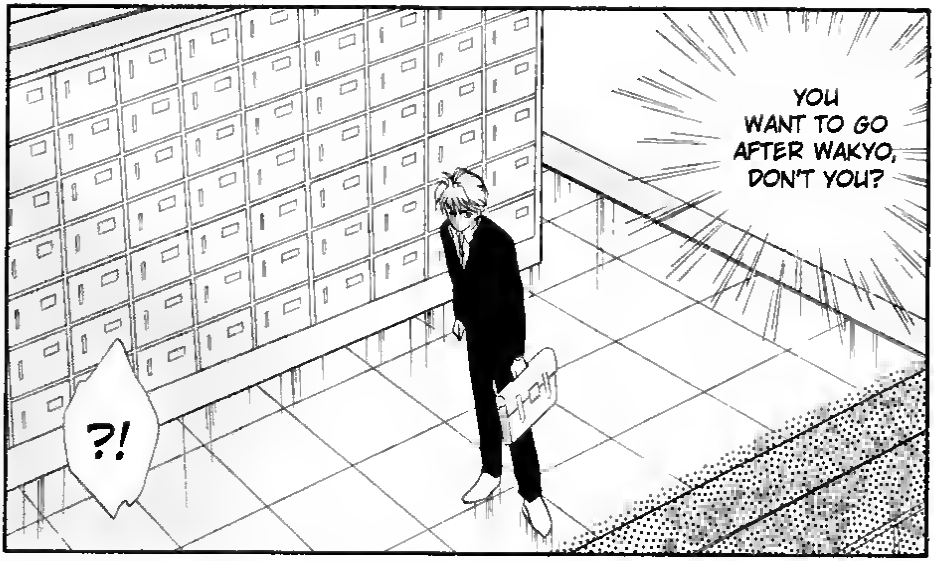
WAKYO!
THUMP
DAMN IT ALL! I'VE GOTTA DO SOMETHING!
WHY DO YOU HESITATE?
YOU HAVE INHERITED BISHU-SAMA'S POWER. USE IT!
WH-WHO'S THERE?!
KA-THUMP
YOU CAN FOLLOW WAKYO IF YOU WISH.
!
OKINO, THAT'S ENOUGH.
UHH...

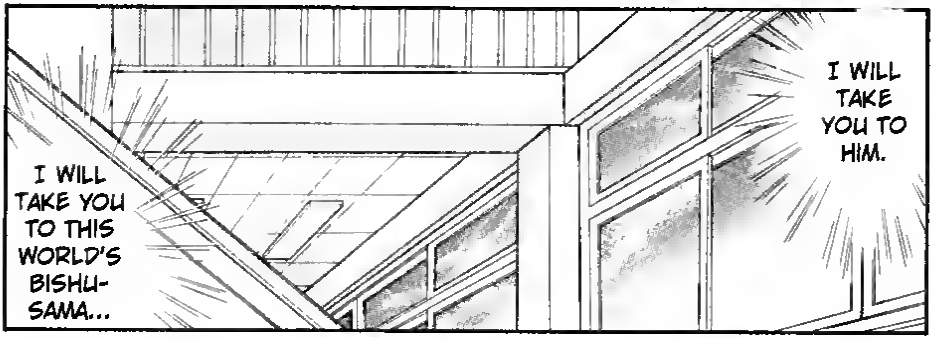

SOME-
THING'S
HERE


HEY, YOU,
WHATEVER
YOU ARE --
HOW ABOUT
SHOWING
YOURSELF!


SWISH
SHOW
MYSELF?
I'VE BEEN
RIGHT IF
FRONT OF
YOU ALL
ALONG.

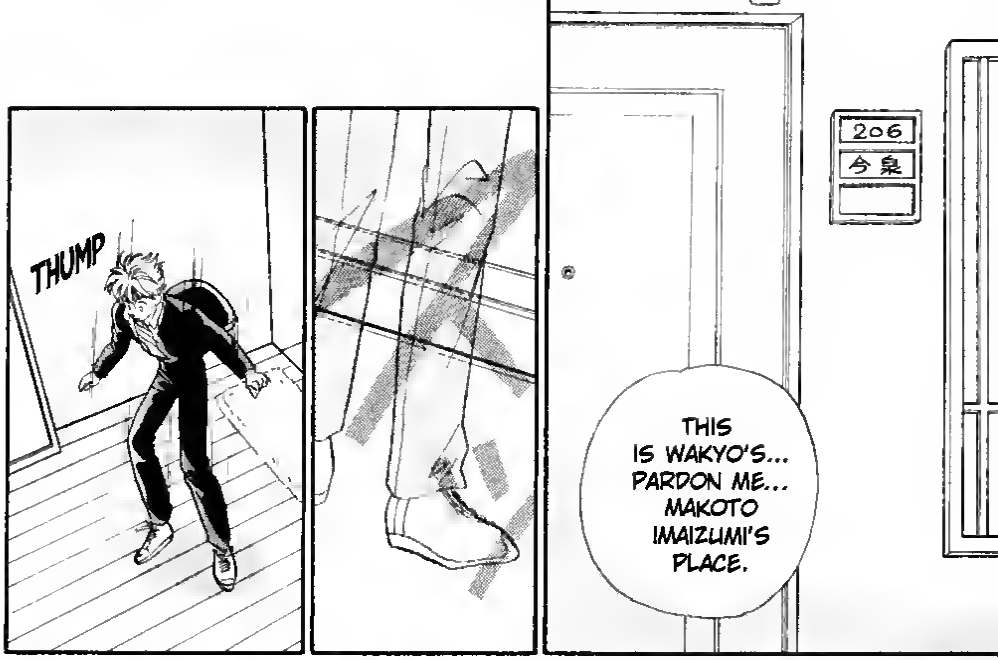
I-I'M
SORRY,
SIR.
MAY I BE
EXCUSED
EARLY?


YOU WANT TO GO AFTER WAKYO, DON'T YOU?
?!

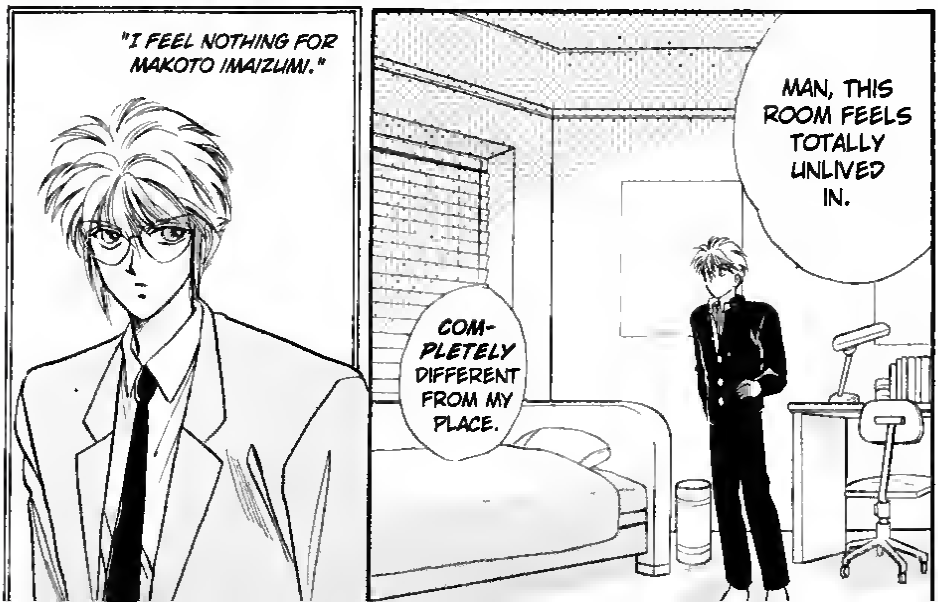

I WILL TAKE YOU TO HIM.
I WILL TAKE YOU TO THIS WORLD'S BISHU-SAMA...

YOU ARE ALONE. ALONE, YOU CAN DO NOTHING.
GIVE ME A BREAK! YOU THINK I'M GONNA LISTEN TO YOU--A DEMON?!

!
I AM SAYING THAT I WANT TO HELP YOU.
PLEASE LISTEN TO ME, SAKUYA.
.....


THUMP
206
今泉
THIS IS WAKYO'S... PARDON ME... MAKOTO IMAIZUMI'S PLACE.

HE TALKED AS IF HE DOESN'T GET ALONG WITH HIS PARENTS VERY WELL.
I WONDER IF HE LIVES ALONE.


"I FEEL NOTHING FOR MAKOTO IMAIZUMI."
MAN, THIS ROOM FEELS TOTALLY UNLIVED IN.
COM-PLETELY DIFFERENT FROM MY PLACE.

THE PARENTS OF MASAYUKI--BISHU-SAMA'S REINCARNATED HUMAN FORM--ARE REALLY WORRIED ABOUT HIM.
.....
AND THEN THERE'S MAKOTO IMAIZUMI'S PARENTS.
KAZUKI OKINO--SAKUYA--HAS A FAMILY, TOO.
SCREEEEECH
?!
EVEN IF HE HADN'T COME INTO THIS WORLD WHILE STILL CLINGING TO THE LAST ONE...
...HE MIGHT'VE STILL ENDED UP ALL BY HIMSELF IN A LONELY ROOM LIKE THIS.

WHAM!
WERE YOU HIT?!
YOU REALLY LET OUT A SCREAM!
WELL, YOU LOOK ALRIGHT.

TURN
WHAT?!
HH
KK

WH-
WHAT JUST HAPPENED?!
LISTEN TO YOU!
I SAID I WOULD HELP YOU--BUT YOU JUST LOOK RIGHT THROUGH ME.
!

LOOK. THIS BODY JUST BECAME VACANT!
?!
SO, I KIND OF HELPED MYSELF.
BUT, I GUESS THAT'S BECAUSE YOU CAN'T SEE ANYTHING SINCE YOU HAVE NO POWER.
I MADE IT SO YOU CAN.

!
YOU MADE THAT CAR HIT HER ON PURPOSE-- DIDN'T YOU?!
Y-YOU TOOK POSSESSION OF THIS CHILD?!
I SAID IT WAS EMPTY. SEE?
.....
SHE WAS ALREADY DEAD.

WHO GIVES YOU THE RIGHT TO USE A HUMAN'S BODY HOWEVER YOU WANT?
FLAP FLOP
LOOK, SAKUYA. LOOK HOW I CAN TWIRL THE ARM ROUND AND ROUND!
WHAT A HIDEOUS THING TO DO!
SHE WAS DEAD, SO YOU JUST HELPED YOURSELF TO THE CORPSE?!
NOW BE GONE, YOU BASTARD!!
AAAHHH!!
!
THAT'S WHY YOUR KIND'LL NEVER BE NOTHING MORE THAN LOWLY DEMON SCUM!!

WHAT'S WRONG, SAKUYA? YOU OVERPOWERED KUGUNO, DIDN'T YOU?
I SHOULD BE EASY TO GET RID OF.
SMIRK
.....
SO DO IT. KILL ME, SAKUYA.
HEH HEH
HA HA. I'M ONLY KIDDING. YOU'RE SUCH A HOT-HEAD.
PAT PAT
JUST WHAT ARE YOU, ANYWAY?
AHH..
GRRRR...

MY NAME IS RUKI.
I SLIPPED OUT OF THE SPIRITUAL DIMENSION BECAUSE I WANTED TO HELP YOU.
HMPH... I'M SUPPOSED TO BELIEVE THAT?
IT'S TRUE. I HAVE LONG YEARNED TO BE WITH BISHU-SAMA-- HE WHO POSSESSES THE POWER TO SUBDUE EVEN GARAI.
I HAVE GREAT ADMIRATION FOR THE KIND, DEEPLY COMPASSIONATE BISHU-SAMA.
I KNOW THAT YOU HAVE INHERITED HIS POWER.
I KNOW, TOO, THAT THE DEMONS ARE KEPT IN BONDAGE ENTIRELY BY BISHU-SAMA'S HAND.
YET, I WANT TO BE OF SERVICE TO BISHU-SAMA. I HAVE WAITED SO LONG FOR THIS TIME TO COME.

I'M SAYING THAT I WANT TO TAKE YOU TO BISHU-SAMA AND WAKYO, SAKUYA!
HERE YOU ARE, ALONE AND POWER-LESS.
HEY! WHERE ARE YOU GOING?
HOME.
WHAT?! IN SPITE OF EVERYTHING I'VE SAID YOU *STILL* DON'T BELIEVE ME?!
.....
WHO'D BELIEVE THE WORDS OF A DEMON?

YOU FRIGHTEN ME SO MUCH! HOW CAN YOU ABANDON BISHU-SAMA AND WAKYO LIKE THIS?!
SAKUYA!!
MY NAME IS KAZUKI OKINO!!
I HAVE NO INTENTION OF ABANDONING BISHU-SAMA AND WAKYO!!
HOW CAN YOU BE SUCH A COWARD?
SAKUYA?!
IN THIS TIME AND IN THIS PLACE I WILL FIGHT AS KAZUKI OKINO!
I AM NOT SAKUYA.

BUT, SAKUYA... ISN'T IT THE SAME THING?
SLAM
OH, HEY, SIS...
CAN'T YOU KNOCK?
OKINO? YOU CUT SCHOOL?
KERCHAK
WELL, I'M NOT. I'M DOING AN OMIAI. MOM, DAD, AND I ARE MEETING THE GUY TODAY.
SINCE HE WAS A CHILD, WAKYO POSSESSED MEMORIES OF THE LAST WORLD...
.....

OH, NATSUKO.
I'VE LIVED A HAPPY LIFE IN THIS WORLD WITH NO MEMORIES OF THE LAST.
NOW I UNDERSTAND HOW HARD IT MUST BE FOR HIM...
AN OMIAI? HOW MANY TIMES HAVE YOU DONE THOSE MATCHMAKING MEETINGS NOW?
WHAT D'YA MEAN "HOW MANY?" I CAN STILL COUNT 'EM ON ONE HAND.
HEY, ARE YOU OKAY? YOU'RE REALLY PALE.
GOT A FEVER?
WHAT?
Y'KNOW, FOR BROTHER AND SISTER, WE REALLY DON'T LOOK ALIKE.

DON'T YOU THINK THAT'S KINDA STRANGE?
HMM, YOU'RE RIGHT. WE DON'T LOOK ALIKE, CONSIDERING WE'RE SIBLINGS.
NO, OF COURSE NOT.
HEY, WAIT A MINUTE! ARE YOU SAYING THAT ONE OF US DOESN'T REALLY BELONG TO OUR PARENTS?
NOT REALLY.
I MEAN, THERE'S NO DOUBT ABOUT IT. WE'RE BLOOD BROTHER AND SISTER.
WELL, NOT TO WORRY. OUR PERSONALITIES ARE SO ALIKE IT'S SCARY.

THANKS, NATSUKO.
I WON'T BE RETURNING HOME FOR AWHILE. PLEASE TAKE CARE OF THINGS WHILE I'M AWAY.
GOOD BYE.

AT LAST YOU'VE COME.
DON'T THINK IT'S BECAUSE I BELIEVE YOU.
.....
I JUST DON'T HAVE ANY OTHER WAY, THAT'S ALL.
SURE, I UNDER-STAND.
OH...
WHAT HAP-PENED?

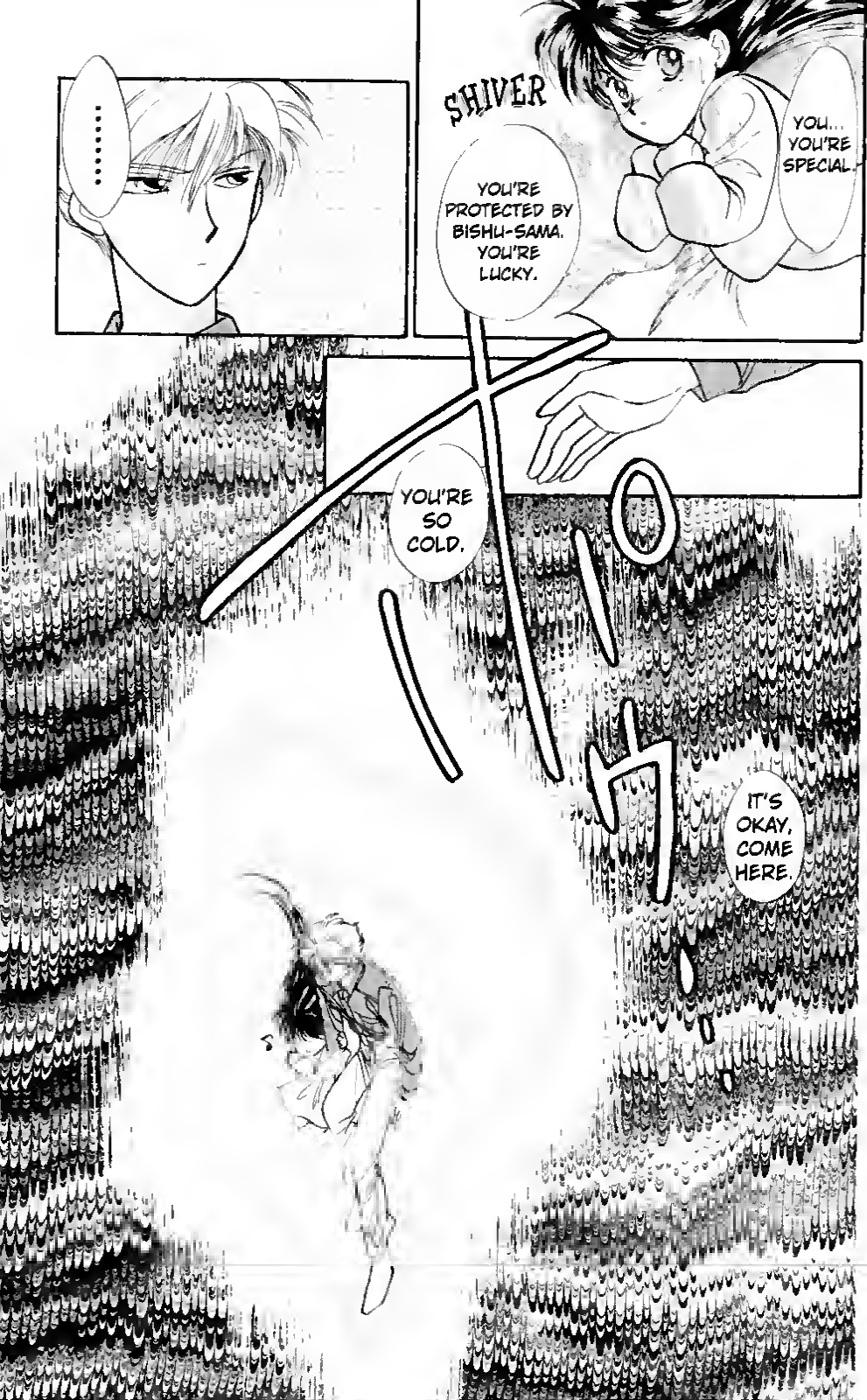
GIVE ME A MINUTE, OKAY?
IT'LL TAKE A LITTLE TIME FOR ME TO FIND THE OPENING TO WHERE THEY'RE KEPT DOWN.

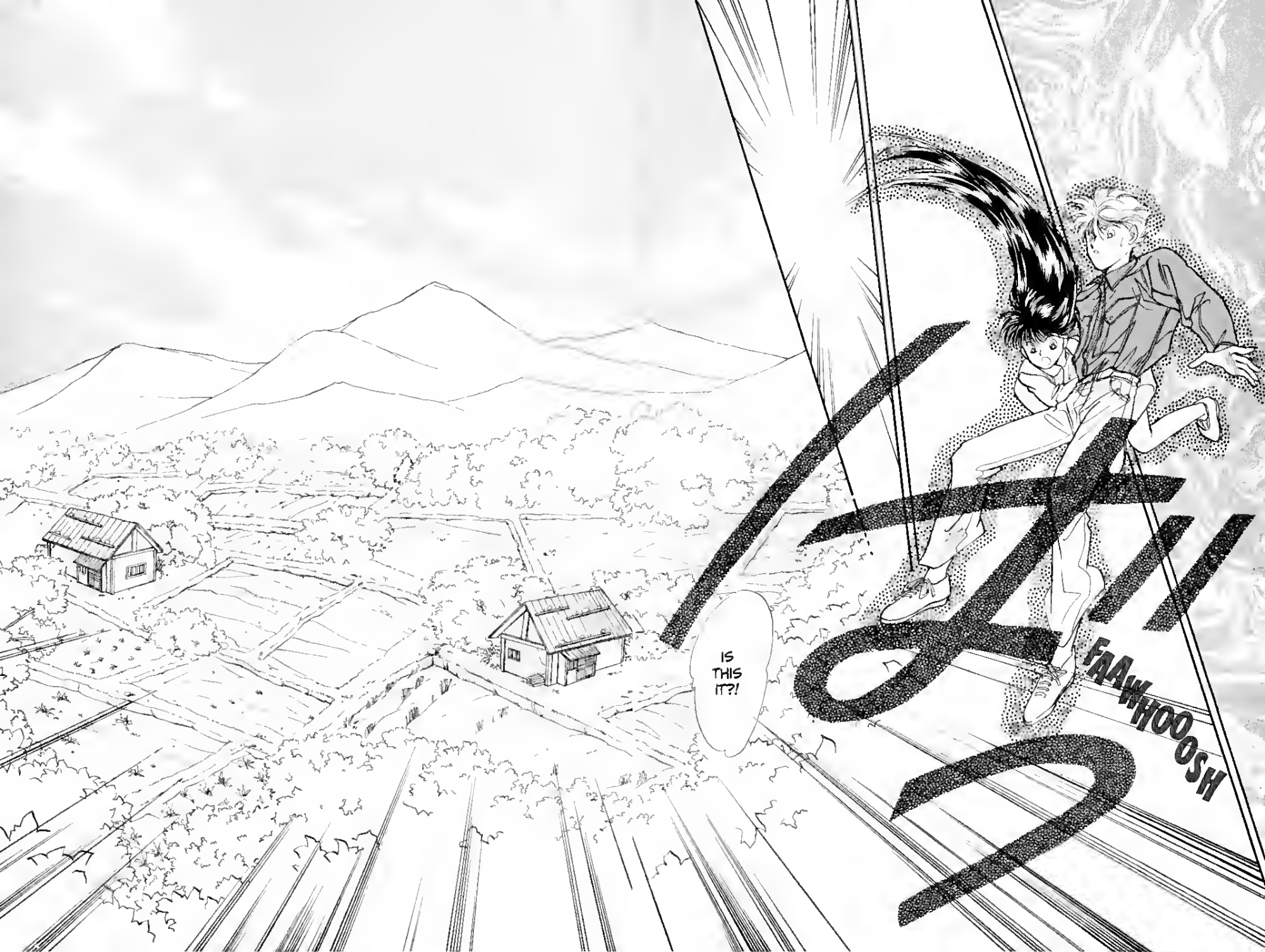
YES.
NATSUKO, ARE YOU READY?

I COULDA SWORE OKINO WAS JUST HERE.

OF COURSE. OKINO'S AT SCHOOL.

GOT IT!
BRRR...
WHAT'S WRONG?
I GUESS I'M NOT USED TO THIS BODY YET.
BESIDES, HUMANS ARE JUST TOO DELICATE.


.....
SHIVER
YOU'RE PROTECTED BY BISHU-SAMA. YOU'RE LUCKY.
YOU... YOU'RE SPECIAL.
YOU'RE SO COLD.
IT'S OKAY, COME HERE.


IS THIS IT?!
FAAWHOOOSH

IT'S... IT'S A VILLAGE!
IT'S THE VILLAGE IN THE LAST WORLD THAT WE--WAKYO, SAKUYA, AND BISHU-SAMA-- LIVED IN!
IS IT HERE?
IS THIS THE PLACE? IS THIS THE UNDERWORLD THAT HOLDS THE DEMONS IN BONDAGE?
PIECES OF A SPIRAL VOL. 1: END

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